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## I. INTRODUCTORY NOTES



The Russian people give a most prominent place in their epic poems to the "Kiev period" of their ancient history.

There is good reason for this. A people that has had much cause for both suffering and rejoicing, always remembers and weighs its experience, setting it down for posterity. The *bylinas*<sup>1</sup> are history as told by the people themselves. They are inaccurate regarding dates and names, and even contain errors of fact, because this folk-lore in verse was not written, but handed down by word of mouth. Later events often replaced earlier occurrences of a similar nature. But the assessment of events was always correct. It could not be otherwise, because the people were not passive observers, but the very subject-matter of history and direct participants in the events described.

Historians who have ignored or misconstrued the popular appraisal of major historical facts have often erred gravely.

Folk-lore has truth and sincerity because it is the voice of the people themselves.

In his study of the *Bylinas of the Vladimirian Cycle* Maikov<sup>2</sup> rightly noted that Russian epic lore corresponds to several consecutive and gradually changing historical periods, and reflects, to a greater or lesser degree, the cus-

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<sup>1</sup> *Bylina*—metric tale of olden times.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> Л. Майков, О былинах Владимирова цикла, СПб 1863. (L. Maikov, *Bylinas of the Vladimirian Cycle*, St. Petersburg, 1863.)

toms and ideas of each. He also pointed out that only the "Kiev period" was peopled by *bogatyr*s.<sup>1</sup>

In his *Course of Russian History*, Kluchevsky also stressed this attitude of the *bylinas* to the "Kiev period"; he rightly pointed out that the people remembered, understood and esteemed Ancient Kiev with its princes and *bogatyr*s more than any of the other capitals which succeeded it.

So long as these authors do not depart from the popular appraisal of the "Kiev period" their reasoning is faultless, but divergence from it gives rise to obvious and deplorable misconceptions.

Maikov, for example, believes that the *bylinas* portray the "Kiev appanage period of Ancient Rus in the cycle centred around Vladimir" and "ignore the princes' internecine strife," although, according to the chronicles, it was the appanage discords that were the main cause of the princes' migrations and wars."<sup>2</sup>

According to Kluchevsky, there was "much confusion and disorder in Ancient Kiev"; "the senseless quarrels of the princes," says Karamzin, "were real calamities for the people."<sup>3</sup> Neither Kluchevsky nor Maikov differentiate between the Ancient Russian state and the period of feudal disintegration.

There is no such confusion in the *bylinas*.

The people had a more accurate periodization of their history. Their *bylinas* do not sing the praises of senseless wrangling. The period of ceaseless feudal strife and "total confusion" came later, and was not reflected in the *bylinas*: the *bogatyr* heroes had already passed away.

In the famous *Lay of Igor's Host* we find the following apt words: "Then, at the time of Oleg Gorislavich, the life

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<sup>1</sup> "On the contrary, the heroes of other cycles are almost never called *bogatyr*s." (L. Maikov, op. cit., p. 1, Note.)

<sup>2</sup> L. Maikov, op. cit., pp. 1, 62.

<sup>3</sup> В. О. Ключевский, Курс русской истории, ч. I, 1937, стр. 204. (V. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part I, 1937, p. 204.)



of Dazhbog's<sup>1</sup> grandsons was sowed and grew in strife, and perished: the life of the people was cut short by the revolts of the princes. The voice of the ploughman urging his horses on with shouts was seldom heard. But oft was heard the caw of the scavenging raven and the harsh voice of the jackdaw preparing to feast on the dead. . . . And from all sides the heathen overran the Russian land."<sup>2</sup> The chronicler of the late 11th century took a similar view when comparing his time with the recent past, when "...the princes of old and their men-at-arms defended the Russian land, and took possession of other lands," whereas today "God has sent the heathen against us to punish us for our greed, and our cattle and villages, and our patrimony have fallen into their hands."<sup>3</sup>

The author of the *Lay of Igor's Host* and the chronicler look with equal disapproval upon the period when parts of the previously integrated Ancient Rus, dismembered under the impact of feudalism, had a separate existence. The people singled out the period of the state of Ancient Rus, a time of might and glory, rather than this period of ceaseless internecine warfare with its resultant weakness in face of external enemies. The people look with sympathy upon the period when Rus by the efforts of the early Kiev princes was merged into a single polity, consisting of East Slav tribes and some non-Slav elements, and became a formidable bulwark against its enemies, affording protection for the people's peaceful labours and development.

Under no circumstances shall we view the "Kiev period" as an "appanage period" of separate principalities and princely quarrels, as Maikov and, in part, Kluchevsky think. The "appanage period" cannot be identified with

<sup>1</sup> *Dazhbog*—god of the sun and fertility.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> Слово о полку Игореве, М.—Л. 1950, стр. 16, 17. (*Lay of Igor's Host*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, pp. 16, 17.)

<sup>3</sup> Новгородская I летопись, СПб 1888, стр. 2. Новгородская первая летопись старшего и младшего изводов, М.—Л. 1950, стр. 104. (*First Novgorod Annals*, St. Petersburg, 1888, p. 2; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, p. 104.)



the "Kiev period," if only because Kiev as a political centre had by that time ceased to exist. It had withered away and was lost in a maze of other local centres. Kluchevsky errs when he says that it was a time when "the people of Kiev again and again turned their thoughts to the people of Chernigov, while the people of Chernigov thought of the people of Novgorod, and all were concerned about the Russian land and the common weal." According to the author of the *Lay of Igor's Host*, a great poet and authority on contemporary politics, relations between the appanages were somewhat different. The chronicles also give an entirely different picture. There was at that time unity among the Russian people only in the ethnic sense, in the sense of common historical experience, never forgotten and continually acting as a cohesive force in spite of political division.

The Russian people as a whole, under whatever rule it lived, never lost sight of its ethnical unity, but of political unity nothing remained at that time even in a relative form, for the state of Ancient Rus had ceased to exist.

The popular sentiment voiced in the *bylinas* pertained to the state of Ancient Rus, to its hey-day, i.e., above all to the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich.

To prove this we need only examine the *bylinas* about the best-known Russian *bogatyr*s—Ilya Muromets, Dobrynya Nikitich, Alyosha Popovich and others. They are all Prince Vladimir's contemporaries and associated with him in one way or another. Together they succeed in their essential task—the defence of their native land against the external foe. Why the people has such clearly voiced affection for this particular period is revealed by comparing the life of the Russian people before and after the formation of the state of Ancient Rus.

"The Slavs and the Antes," says Procopius, "are not ruled by one man ( *πρὸς ἀνδρόευνος* ), but live in democracy ( *ἐν δημοκρατίᾳ* ) since olden times, and that is why joy and sorrow are commonly shared by all."<sup>1</sup> This is corroboration

<sup>1</sup> Procopius, *De bello gothico*, III, 14.

rated by Mauricius Strategicus. The latter's testimony is of particular interest, because he studied the Slavs with a definite purpose: he was concerned with their military potential in order to draw practical conclusions for the Byzantine Empire. He wrote: "Not having a chief at their head and engaging in internecine warfare, they do not adhere to a fighting order..." "Since they have many chieftains ( ῥηγῶν L. rex) among whom there is no accord, it would be wise to win over some of them, particularly those on our frontiers, with the aid of promises or gifts, and to attack others, so that not all of them should be antagonistic (to us) or united under the rule of one leader."<sup>1</sup>

Mauricius suggests that steps be taken to prevent the Slavs from uniting since such a unification would, beyond doubt, strengthen them and not only make them capable of defending themselves, but also make them a threat to their neighbours, above all Byzantium.

Ancient Rus achieved just what the Byzantine statesman feared. All the Eastern Slavs and many non-Slav tribes were drawn under Kiev rule. Ancient Rus became fully capable of defending herself and a mighty force vis-à-vis her neighbours. Discord among her tribal chieftains ( ῥηγες ) ceased, and conditions conducive to progress took shape. This was undoubtedly an important achievement. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Russian people regards this period in its history with affection.

Another fact merits serious attention: the *bylinas* of the Vladimirian cycle, which tell of Kiev and the "Kiev period," have been handed down to us by the Great Russians and not by the Ukrainians. They are sung in the former Arkhangelsk, Olonetsk and Perm provinces, in Siberia, in the Lower Volga region, on the Don, in short, wherever the Russian people enjoyed a free life, wherever the yoke of serfdom was lighter or did not exist at all. This affection of the Great Russian people for its remote past, this preserva-

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<sup>1</sup> Mauricius, *Strategici*, XI, 5.



tion of the earliest and most precious facts of this life, indicates that the history of Kiev Rus is not the history of the Ukrainian people alone. It is the period of our history during which the Great Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples originated, the period which became the "cradle of the Russian nationality," as Kluchevsky puts it. It was no accident that Ilya, a peasant's son from the village of Karacharovo, near Murom, made his way, surmounting all dangers, through the "Vyatichy forests" to Prince Vladimir's capital in Kiev. In spite of attempts to represent this otherwise and to claim that Murom is the Chernigov town of Morovsk, and Karacharovo village the Chernigov town of Karachev, the *bylina* version stands and is corroborated by additional considerations. Solovei the Robber,<sup>1</sup> his comrade Skvorets,<sup>2</sup> the Dyatlovy<sup>3</sup> Hills, on which stood the Mordovian town of Ibragimov, or Abramov, destroyed in the early 13th century and replaced by the Russian town of Nizhny (Gorky)—all suggest Mordovian towns named after birds. Slav settlements, among them Murom, one of the oldest, were to be found on Mordovian territory at a very early date. This area is unquestionably connected with Kiev, a fact also confirmed by the chronicles.

Kiev was therefore the centre of a major state, and its authority extended over wide expanses up to the Oka and Volga basins. It represented a whole period in the history of Eastern Europe.

The history of Ancient Rus was not a history of the Ukraine, nor of Byelorussia, nor yet of Great Russia alone. It was the history of a state that enabled all three to mature and gain strength. And this is what makes the period in question of paramount importance in the life of our country.

It is self-evident that the political successes of the peoples within the state of Ancient Rus, above all the Eastern Slavs, i.e., the Russian people who indisputably played the

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<sup>1</sup> *Solovei*—nightingale.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> *Skvorets*—starling.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> *Dyatlovy*—a derivative of *dyatel*—woodpecker.—*Tr.*

leading part in this process, became possible thanks only to certain conditions of their internal development. It would be naïve to think that the unification of the Eastern Slavs and non-Slavs under Kiev rule was the result of external interference.

Prior to this unification our peoples had gained extensive experience and had made substantial economic and social progress. The difficult problems connected with the economic, social and political development of the Eastern European peoples, and of the Eastern Slavs above all, very naturally drew the attention of scholars. Today these problems are of even greater relevance. It goes without saying that there can be no correct appreciation of the Russian historical process as a whole without a solution of these pressing problems.

The wide divergence of views among scholars is largely due to methodological differences. It is also relevant that material on this remote period is either scanty, vague or inaccurate. In addition, these problems, although concerning a period so far removed from our times, have never been of purely academic significance. That is why they were the subject of a sharp struggle dependent upon the national and political point of view of the participants.

Ever since these problems became the subject of research they have aroused intense interest and heated argument. Academician Gerhard Friedrich Müller's work, *The Origin and Name of the Russian People*, in which the author undoubtedly belittles the Russian people's part in the formation of its state and ancient history, provoked a vigorous retort from Lomonosov. "It is so strange," Lomonosov wrote, "that if Müller had been master of a lively style, he would have made the Russian people into a people poorer even than the lowliest ever portrayed by any other writer."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> М. В. Ломоносов, „Репорт“ 16 сент. 1749 г. (Биларский, Материалы для биографии Ломоносова, СПб 1865, стр. 760). (M. V. Lomonosov, *Report*, Sept. 16, 1749. Bilyarsky, *Materials for a Biography of Lomonosov*, St. Petersburg, 1865, p. 760.)



We find the same passionate disputes at a later date. In the 1870's Gedeonov, the author of *The Varangians and Rus*, sharply opposes the opinions of the Normanists. "An inexorable Norman veto," he writes, "hangs over the interpretation of every relic of our antiquity. But who, what Darwin is to breathe life into this idol with a Norman head and a Slav body?"<sup>1</sup> Such examples are numerous.

It is not therefore surprising that disputes regarding the fundamental problems of our early history were so spirited.

I am not satisfied that I have been fully successful in unravelling this tangled skein. I merely wished to sum up a number of our achievements in this field, to give a critical review of the various aspects of social life in our remote past, to verify the evidence of the various sources, both written and otherwise, by comparison, and thus try to answer the questions facing us today.

Soviet scholars try to offset the paucity of the written sources, very natural for the earliest period of our history, by drawing upon fresh and very varied material evidence. This includes monuments of material culture, language studies, popular survivals among the Russian people itself, as well as among the peoples of the U.S.S.R. which until recently had been in the lower stages of social development, etc. But this widened range of sources has not so far made it possible fully to solve the problems which confront us and so delve into the obscure past.

In spite of great advances in recent years, archaeology is often powerless to provide answers to many of our problems owing to the specific nature of its matter and methods; linguistics is not only limited in its possibilities but often yields less than it might. Of course, the co-ordination of archaeological and linguistical data with the addition of folk-lore does widen the scope of historic knowledge, but

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<sup>1</sup> С. Гедеев, *Варяги и Русь*, ч. I, СПб 1876, стр. VII и X. (S. Gedeonov, *The Varangians and Rus*, Part I, St. Petersburg, 1876, pp. VII, X.)



even this is not sufficient to transform controversial opinion into incontrovertible fact.

Neither should we rest satisfied that the appearance of written sources substantially changes the position of the scholar, making it possible for him to go beyond the sphere of more or less well-founded conjectures. First of all, the capital of Ancient Rus was on many occasions devastated, which is why very few written sources on the history of Kiev Rus have come down to us; secondly a written source, particularly if it relates to so remote a past, has its own specific characteristics, requires a specific approach and does not always guarantee the solution of problems beyond all possibility of doubt.

But in spite of all the difficulties which make our historical deductions in great measure conditional, not a single generation of historians has ever refused to delve into this nebulous maze to seek therein the beginnings of social phenomena which have never ceased to agitate man's mind. It is not curiosity, but necessity.

The following essays deal with the social and political relations of Ancient Rus mainly within the limits allowed by our written sources. Other sources are drawn upon only to a limited extent.

The art of writing appears in various societies at a rather advanced stage of their history. It was in a class society that a written language appeared among the Eastern Slavs, when the remnants of tribal relations lingered only as survivals. The first written documents that have come to our knowledge—treaties with the Greeks, *pravdas*,<sup>1</sup> chronicles—relate to a society which has severed its ties with the tribal system.

The 911 Treaty with the Greeks mentions written wills<sup>2</sup> which the Russians living in Byzantium had the right to

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*—law, truth.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Шахматов, *Повесть временных лет*, т. I, П. 1916, стр. 39; *Повесть временных лет*, ч. I, М.—Л., 1950, стр. 28. (A. A. Shakhmatov, *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Vol. I, Petrograd, 1916, p. 39; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, p. 28.)

draw up. Assuming in this case that the Russians in Byzantium drew up their wills in Greek and not in Russian, the use of the Russian is much more clearly indicated in the 944 Treaty, under the terms of which the Rus prince was to provide his envoys and merchants sent to Byzantium with charters "*writing* thus: I have sent so many ships." (*Author's italics.*) Such deeds served as guaranty that it was the Rus prince who sent them and that they came with peaceful intentions.

A recent study by Obnorsky of the language of the treaties leads to a very important conclusion. The treaties of 911 and 944 differ in language. The 911 Treaty contains many features of Bulgarian, although it is definitely written in Russian. On the other hand, elements of Russian origin are clearly to be seen in the 944 Treaty. This suggests that a translation of the 911 Treaty into Bulgarian was made by a Bulgarian, and later edited by a Rus, whereas the 944 Treaty must have been translated by a Rus scholar. Obnorsky is convinced that both translations were made at times approximately coinciding with the appearance of the treaties themselves.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the existence of a Rus written language in the early 10th century is unquestionable.<sup>2</sup> (For details see p. 497 et al.)

In the period in which the documents I use here were written, i.e., from the 9th to the 12th centuries, the ruling classes of the society existing throughout the vast expanses occupied by the Eastern Slavs spoke almost the same tongue, the one we find in the documents in which it was only slightly distorted by subsequent copyists. These classes

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<sup>1</sup> С. П. Обнорский, Язык договоров русских с греками (сб. „Язык и мышление," VI-VII, стр. 102-103). (S. P. Obnorsky, *The Language of Rus Treaties with the Greeks*. Collection *Language and Thought*. VI-VII. pp. 102-03.)

<sup>2</sup> Academician N. K. Nikolsky convincingly reviews the problem relating to the origin of the written language in Russia in his *Повесть временных лет, как источник для истории начального периода русской письменности и культуры*, Л. 1930. (*Chronicle of Ancient Years as a Source for the Study of Initial Period of Russian Writings and Culture*, Leningrad, 1930.)



understood that they had common interests and means of defending them and had established religious ties with neighbouring Byzantium at a very early date.

Obviously, the major facts set down in documents often have a long history of their own, of which these documents say nothing. Their very nature is occasionally such that it precludes any historical approach, since they were often intended to record a definite, at times very limited, range of transient phenomena. These invariably bear the traces of moribund and nascent elements which are, however, not always easy to discern.

Only the author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* set out to solve a problem of real historical scope—a problem which remains in some degree unsolved to this day. He wished to write nothing less than the history of Ancient Rus with its centre at Kiev from its earliest times: "When the Russian land arose, who first began to rule in Kiev, and how the Russian land came to be." The chronicler wrote with a definite aim in view and in a definite political situation. His task was to show the role of the princely house of the Ryurikovichy in the history of Kiev Rus. Shakhmatov succeeded in showing that the first pages of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* contain later versions of ancient legends of the beginnings of the Russian land.<sup>1</sup>

We shall have to differ widely with the chronicler's version of the origins of the Russian state, not only because we have different views on society, the state and the historical process as a whole, but also because, given his definite aim, the chronicler had selected facts, which were full of meaning to him, but often of secondary importance to us, and ignored those which today would be of primary importance. Besides, all our chroniclers were dependent on their patrons, usually the princes. It was Vladimir Monomakh who ordered the compilation of the chronicle now at our disposal.

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<sup>1</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, op. cit., pp. XV, XXI, etc.

The chronicler, who was also the editor of his predecessor's writings, made a note about himself at the end of his book: "Father-Superior Sylvester of St. Mikhail's wrote this book of chronicles, in the hope of receiving God's mercy, during the reign of Prince Vladimir in Kiev and my superiority at Saint Mikhail's in 6624, in the 9th year of the indiction. And whosoever reads this book, let him pray for me."<sup>1</sup>

It will be easy to surmise what Vladimir Monomakh demanded of the chronicler if we consider the political situation at the time.

For this we shall have to examine political relations in the second half of the 11th and early 12th centuries. We shall have to study, even if superficially, the people who were then making history, those who wrote history and those for whom it was written.

The outlines of feudal social relations took definite shape in the 9th century. The development of the basis in the 10th and 11th centuries demanded changes in the form of the state. Large landholdings grew up and were consolidated with the active assistance of the superstructure. The political weight of the landowning nobility increased considerably. The ways in which the peasants held in fee were exploited, changed. New town centres stood out in relief. Various parts of the Rurikovichy Empire matured and gained in strength. Their domestic and foreign policies gained such importance that, far from helping them to grow rich and strong, the centre at Kiev, headed by the Kiev prince, became a brake upon their development and policy. The spectre of political disintegration of Ancient Rus loomed large. The princes increasingly began to manifest centrifugal tendencies, and clashed with each other as a result of their conflicting interests, which inevitably led to internecine wars. But these were not the only threats to the feudal lords. There were also popular uprisings in va-

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<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 1110; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 188.



rious parts of the Ancient Rus state. Finally, it was a time of grave external danger.

The chronicler, who was not inclined to devote much attention to popular movements, nevertheless mentions those of 1068, 1071 and 1113.<sup>1</sup> The latter seems to have been particularly violent, and the bewildered ruling classes of Kiev society, forced to reckon with the mood and demands of the insurgents, insistently urged Vladimir Monomakh, the most energetic and powerful of the princes, to ascend the Kiev throne. We know something of what the Kiev delegation told Vladimir Monomakh, attempting to intimidate him with the prospect of a mounting popular movement.

The position of the Kiev ruling classes, of the numerous Rus princes, as well as of the boyars, church dignitaries, merchants and money-lenders proved to be more complicated and precarious than they had imagined. "The years of Yaroslav were past," "the arrows were scattered over the land." In their confusion the upper classes sought their salvation in Vladimir Monomakh. Upon his arrival in Kiev, Vladimir took various measures, including repression, compromise and appeals to public opinion. The 12 years of Vladimir's reign revived the times when Kiev was at the head of the state and held political sway, although Vladimir's authority was unlike that of his father or of Yaroslav.

A few words on Kiev, Vladimir Monomakh, his grandfather and his father, are necessary to place people and events in their correct perspective.

The Kiev of the late 10th and early 11th centuries, Charles Robert Thietmar says, was a large city with 400 churches, 8 market-places, and countless inhabitants. In the second half of the 11th century, Adam of Bremen calls Kiev a rival of Constantinople. In his famous *Discourse* a Kiev metropolitan, Hilarion, calls it a city "glittering with grandeur." The *Laurenty Annals* for the year 1124 say that

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<sup>1</sup> There is yet another vague hint in the entry for the year 1091.



Kiev was the scene of a terrible fire, and that "of churches alone nearly 600 were burned down." This may well be an overstatement. Nevertheless, 11th-century Kiev was, beyond all doubt, one of Europe's major cities. That is why West-European chroniclers pay it so much attention. The prince's court in Kiev was famous throughout the then known world, because he had by then taken his place in international affairs.

Yaroslav the Lawgiver had family ties with the ruling dynasties of England, France, Germany, Poland, Scandinavia, Hungary and Byzantium. His daughter Anna was the wife of King Henry I of France and played a part in French politics. Charters issued in the name of the infant King Philip I bear her signature in Slavonic and Latin letters (Анна рѣина, i.e., Anna regina, Anne, Agna regina). Yaroslav's grand-daughter Yevpraxia—Adelheida Vsevolodovna (1071-1109) was the wife of Henry IV, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Olaf of Norway, a fugitive from his kingdom, lived at the court of Yaroslav, while his son regained the Norwegian crown with Rus aid. Harald was another famous Viking who also lived at Yaroslav's court. He became king of Norway after his famous campaigns in Sicily and Italy, and eventually lost his life in England. He was married to Yaroslav's daughter Yelizaveta. According to the *Laws of Edward the Confessor*, Edwin and Edward, the sons of the English King Edmund Ironside, sought refuge in Yaroslav's Kiev after being driven out of England by the Danish King, Canute.

The marital ties between the Rus princes and Polish and Czech princes will be considered later (Part VIII). Rus family connections with Western Europe were also remembered in the West much later<sup>1</sup>: in 1570 a Bavarian merchant, Libenauer, in a project presented to the Bavarian duke spoke of the advantages of closer ties with Moscow,

<sup>1</sup> В. С. Иконников, Опыт русской историографии, т. II, кн. I, стр. 142—146. (V. S. Ikonnikov, *Essays in Russian Historiography*, Vol. II, bk. I, pp. 142-46.)

and recalled the marriage of Henry IV to Yaroslav's granddaughter.<sup>1</sup> While visiting the Sophia Cathedral in Kiev in 1893, the Duke of Montpensier stressed that Yaroslav was his ancestor by the latter's daughter Anna.<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that Yaroslav's children knew many European languages. It is well known that Vsevolod Yaroslavich, Vladimir Monomakh's father, spoke five languages. Vsevolod was married to a Greek princess of the house of the Monomakhs, his son Vladimir married the daughter of the last Anglo-Saxon king, Gytha Garaldovna, who was forced to flee England after the Norman invasion.

I am not in a position to cite the numerous facts pertaining to Kiev's participation in the affairs of European states and peoples. But I think that the facts already adduced, however one-sided, are a striking indication of Kiev's position in the Europe of its time.

Vladimir Monomakh, to whom we must now return, was part of the main stream of European politics.

He had good literary taste, as his *Sermon* indicates. He was also well aware of the political significance of the chronicles. When he came to Kiev he found a chronicle compiled by a monk of the Kiev Pechera Monastery, but it was not to his satisfaction.

It is not known what displeased Vladimir, or why he considered that it should be rewritten by another scholar and in another institution (the Vydubitsky Mikhail Monastery, built by his father Vsevolod), because it has not been preserved. We can, however, guess what it was Vladimir Monomakh wanted of Sylvester, the Father-Superior of the Vydubitsky Monastery.

It appears that Sylvester fulfilled his task successfully, i.e., he understood the requirements of the moment. Vladi-

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<sup>1</sup> P. Ю. Буннер, Иван Грозный, 1942, стр. 83. (R. Y. Wipper, *Ivan the Terrible*, 1942, p. 83.)

<sup>2</sup> "Исторический Вестник", № 3, 1894, стр. 886. (*Istorichesky Vestnik*. No. 3, 1894, p. 886.)



mir Monomakh was satisfied with the new work and made a point of showing his favour to the author: two years later he appointed him bishop of his family town of Pereyaslavl, where Sylvester died in 1123. His work is permeated with the struggle against the separatist tendencies of the feudal nobility, the desire to affirm the idea of Rus unity and to impress the feudal lords with the necessity of subordination to Kiev and the Kiev prince.

Sylvester made use of his predecessor's writings, which contained conceptions he could use with only slight modification. In the *Novgorod Annals* he read of the erstwhile rule of the Varangians in Novgorod where they "perpetrated violence on the Slavs, the Krivichy and Merya and the Chud"<sup>1</sup> and of how the oppressed drove out the oppressors and "became their own masters and built towns," of the dire consequences of the absence of a strong authority, when, after the expulsion of the Varangians, they "began to fight each other, and there was great war among them and strife, and town was pitted against town, and there was no law among them."<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, we know nothing of what was written on the subject in the still more ancient Kiev *Initial Chronicle* which has also not been preserved. Sylvester rejected the *Novgorod Annals'* report of Varangian violence, and did not use the story of the Novgorod uprising against Rurik. He took from the writings of his predecessors only that which he considered useful and instructive.

Sylvester tries to impress upon his readers that interne-cine wars and uprisings occur as a result of the absence of strong rule; its restoration ("voluntary invitation") spares society sundry calamities. The "saviours" of society in the 9th century, as legend, adapted to suit a definite purpose, has it, were the Varangian princes, Rurik in particular. The "Rurikovichy," it is said, fulfilled this mission for

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<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, 1888, p. 4; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, 1888, p. 5.



a long time. Not till the end of the 11th century did history repeat itself: "They began to fight each other, and there was great war among them and strife."

The chronicler in this way justifies the invitation of Monomakh to Kiev. From this it follows logically that it was the duty of the Kievites to submit to his authority. The Kievites of the second half of the 11th century knew only too well what "strife" meant.

It is clear why Sylvester's accounts and reasoning should be accepted only with reserve. Even though he reported the facts as they were according to his lights, he used them for his own purposes and interpreted them accordingly.

It is understandable why the chronicler, who began his writings with a story of the origin of the Kiev princes focused attention on Novgorod and the Novgorod princes, and on Prince Ryurik and his successors, in particular.

Carried away by his idea and looking northwards, the southern chronicler was sparing in his treatment of the life of his contemporaries, the Southern Polyane. He was first and foremost a court historian of the reigning Kiev dynasty.

He naturally tried to demonstrate the role not only of the "Ryurikovichy" of his time, but also of their ancestors, whom he without doubt tried to portray in a favourable light. At times he disputes the more correct and widely accepted versions of the not too distant past which were frequently unfavourable to the ruling class as a whole, and to its leader in particular. The chronicler's attitude is understandable. It was not only Russian Nestors and Sylvesters who found themselves in such a position. Widukind appears to have had a similar task of ennobling the origin of Anglo-Saxon kings and resorted to similar methods. The Britons address their legendary kings in practi-

cally the same words: "*Terram latam et spatiosam et omnium rerum copia refertam vestrae mandant ditioni parere.*"<sup>1</sup>

With this central political aim in view, the chronicler set about achieving it with all the means at his disposal. It should be said that he made skilful use of them: he realized the value of the sources, he has a critical though peculiar approach to them, and is able to sift the wheat from the chaff. But, naturally, he was above all a man of his time and environment, who well knew the political implications of what he was doing. He understood the international situation. He tended to turn towards Byzantium and as a result to belittle ancient ties with the West, denounced as heretic and accursed following the division of the churches.<sup>2</sup>

He had at his disposal Greek, West-European and Russian written sources, as well as legends, personal observations, studies of his environment and of Slav and non-Slav tribes, often at a lower stage of development. He was so successful in developing his views that they remained current among our scholars until very recently, and are in part not without significance even today.

It would be wrong to expect the chronicler to provide solutions to present-day problems, but we cannot do without his unique work. We are faced with the unusually difficult task of discovering the various elements in the chronicler's work which could be used for our own purposes. Sukhomlinov, Sreznevsky, Bestuzhev-Ryumin, Shakhmatov and Priselkov, and more recently Likhachov, have attempted it and, it must be acknowledged, have achieved considerable, though by no means adequate, results. It is to be hoped that their successors will succeed in carrying this

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<sup>1</sup> К. Н. Бестужев-Рюмин, Русская история, т. I, СПб 1872, стр. 98. Прим. 3. (К. N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, *Russian History*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1872, p. 98, Note 3.)

<sup>2</sup> N. K. Nikolsky, *op. cit.*



work forward with the aid of archaeological and linguistic materials.

Sreznevsky and Bestuzhev-Ryumin made valuable observations (unfortunately unjustifiably forgotten) on the historical inscriptions made before the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* and to which the chronicler had access. Sukhomlinov was of the opinion that our initial chronicle consisted of brief remarks of a historical nature made on paschal tables, a sample of which was discovered in a 14th-century manuscript. Sreznevsky and Bestuzhev-Ryumin supported this view. That such tables were kept in various places and that there were several of them is shown by a comparison of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* and Yakov's *In Memory and Praise of St. Vladimir*. Both authors had used different records to describe the same period and practically the same events, a fact which accounts for the difference in dates and perhaps in the selection of facts.<sup>1</sup>

This research is still going on, but its results can already be used to outline the main stages in the development of the society which existed over the vast expanses of Eastern Europe not only from the 9th to the 12th centuries, but also much earlier.

It should be noted that almost all our documents relate to the territory which lies along the Volkhov and the Dnieper, where the major events of the period occurred, and scarcely touch upon points farther removed from this main artery. From this it does not at all follow that these remote places had no history of their own. There, as elsewhere, life went on, although it failed to find any reflection in

<sup>1</sup> М. И. Сухомлинов, О древней русской летописи, как памятнике литературном, стр. 28—45; И. И. Срезневский, Чтения о древних русских летописях. Прилож. к III т. Записок Академии Наук, СПб 1862 г., стр. 10; К. Н. Бестужев-Рюмин, О составе русских летописей („Летопись занятий археогр. комиссии“). (М. I. Sukhomlinov, *The Ancient Russian Chronicle as a Literary Memorial*, pp. 28-45; I. I. Sreznevsky, *Lectures on Ancient Russian Chronicles*, Addenda to Vol. III of *Zapiski Akademii Nauk*, St. Petersburg, 1862, p. 10; K. N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, *Concerning the Composition of Russian Chronicles. Letopis Zanyatii Arkheograficheskoi Komissii.*)



the chronicle. But it is being revealed today by systematic excavations. The works of Spitsyn,<sup>1</sup> Artsikhovsky,<sup>2</sup> Lyavdansky,<sup>3</sup> Rybakov,<sup>4</sup> Ravdonikas,<sup>5</sup> Tretyakov,<sup>6</sup> and others make it possible for us to discuss the conditions and nature of the economy in the earliest period of our history, the passing away of the tribal system, the emergence of classes, class relationships and religious ideas both in the central plains and in the regions to the west, north and south-east of the great water-way, which is so well described in the Russian annals and in the interesting, albeit by no means impartial, work of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and in the Byzantian and West-European chronicles (the renowned way "from the Varangians to the Greeks"). Never-

<sup>1</sup> А. А. Спицын, Владимирские курганы („Записки Археол. общ.", т. XV). (A. A. Spitsyn, *The Vladimir Burial Mounds. Zapiski Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva*, Vol. XV.)

<sup>2</sup> А. В. Арциховский, Курганы вятичей. (A. V. Artsikhovsky, *The Burial Mounds of the Vyatichy*.)

<sup>3</sup> А. Н. Лявданский, Некоторые данные о городищах Смоленской губернии („Научн. изв. Смол. гос. ун.", т. III, вып. 3, Смоленск 1926). (A. N. Lyavdansky, *A Few Facts About the Strongholds in Smolensk Province. Nauchniye Izvestia Smolenskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, Vol. III, Issue 3, Smolensk, 1926.)

<sup>4</sup> Б. А. Рыбаков, Радзимичы. („Працы Археалёгічнай камісіі", т. III. Белорусская Академия наук, Инст. истории, Минск 1932); *его же*, Ремесло древней Руси, 1948. (B. A. Rybakov, *The Radzimichy. Pratsi Arkheologichnai Kamisii*, Vol. III. Byelorussian Academy of Science, Institute of History, Minsk 1932. *Handicrafts of Ancient Rus*, 1948, by the same author.)

<sup>5</sup> В. И. Равдоникас, Некоторые моменты процесса возникновения феодализма в лесной полосе Восточной Европы в свете археологических данных („Основные проблемы генезиса и развития феодального общества", изд. ГАИМК, 1934, стр. 102—130). (V. I. Ravdonikas, *Nascent Feudalism in the Forest Regions of Eastern Europe in the Light of Archaeological Data. The Major Problems in the Genesis and Development of Feudal Society*, State Academy of the History of Material Culture, 1934, pp. 102-30.)

<sup>6</sup> П. Н. Третьяков, Подсечное земледелие в Восточной Европе, изд. ГАИМК; *его же*, Расселение древнерусских племен по археологическим данным („Сов. Археология", № 4); *его же*, Восточнославянские племена, 1948 г. (изд. второе, М. 1953). (P. N. Tretyakov, *Assartage in Eastern Europe*, State Academy of the History of Material Culture; by the same author: *Settlements of Ancient Rus Tribes According to Archaeological Data. Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, No. 4 and *East Slav Tribes*, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1953.)

theless, because the archaeological data is incomplete and scattered, our attention will be mostly directed not to these remoter regions, but to the places more fully described in the documentary material which is more comprehensible and precise than material evidence.

This is also inevitable because it is here that the outline of the process with which we are concerned is most clearly to be seen; it is here that the principal progressive trends in the history of Rus and the other peoples who then inhabited the territory of Eastern Europe become evident.

What is it we wish to know? What are the questions we expect the chronicles, the earliest survivals of material culture and the other historical records to answer? We are still faced with the problem which our first historian attempted to solve 800 years ago: the origin of the Russian land, its development, and the stages of its growth.

Without delving into the "prehistoric" (which the progress of scholarship is making increasingly historic) past of Eastern Europe, and touching briefly on the history of those of our peoples who outstripped the Slavs in their development and with whom they had the most diverse contacts, I intend to dwell mainly on the problems of the origin and development of Ancient Rus, the major stages of her history, her social forces and conditions.

It is clear that the state could have arisen only after the disintegration of the tribal system when class relations, with all their conflicting interests and complicated interdependence, replaced tribal relations. But we cannot reliably fix a date for this process as yet.

Nevertheless, although we are unable precisely to date these major events (the historian of every country finds himself in a similar position), our observations will enable us to outline, even if approximately, the periods within which changes occurred in the history of the peoples who have lived and continue to live in this country. We have written and other records at our disposal. But a source, whatever its nature, can only be useful if the student well

knows what he wishes it to yield. It is very important, therefore, to lay the basis for the solution of the main problem by defining the principles, the premises, for research. I believe we should start by defining the conditions and the nature of the development of Eastern Slavonic society as well as the place occupied in world history by the Eastern Slavs and Ancient Rus, in the formation of which they played the leading role.



## II. THE STATE OF ANCIENT RUS IN WORLD HISTORY



While the interdependence of the histories of peoples is beyond doubt and today requires no proof, the concrete analysis of this interdependence is imperative. I have in mind the remote past of the Russian people and its immediate ancestor—the Eastern Slavs, who lived at a definite time, in a definite ethnical and cultural environment, i.e., in a definite historical milieu. This could not but have its effect on the rate and nature of the development of Rus. It to some extent determined its future history.

The Slavs were the most numerous people in Europe. Ancient Rus was the largest of the Slav and non-Slav states.

There is no doubt that the history of Kiev and pre-Kiev Rus occupies a considerable period in world history. It is therefore natural that we should try to define more clearly the part played by this basically Slav state.

The division of the history of mankind into three major periods—the Ancient, the Middle and the Modern—is very old. But Marxist scholarship has given it a particular interpretation by basing its periodization on the underlying principle of the mode of production.

This is clearly expressed by Engels in the closing pages of his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. "Slavery was the first form of exploitation, peculiar to the world of antiquity; it was followed by serfdom in the Middle Ages, and by wage labour in modern times.



These are the three great forms of servitude, characteristic of the three great epochs of civilization..."<sup>1</sup>

Our task is to determine the moment at which the Slavs first appeared in world history as an active and organized force, and in particular the moment at which the Slavonic states in Eastern Europe emerged.

At the time when the Roman Republic was becoming a world empire based on slave labour, and was attempting more or less successfully to maintain the slave system in its dependencies, the Slavs, like the other peoples of Northern and Eastern Europe, including the Germans, lived in a tribal system. Fairly comprehensive data is furnished by Caesar, and later by Tacitus, in their descriptions of the Germans. The Romans had at that time to pay serious heed to the neighbours threatening them from the east.

Roman and Greek scholars tell us, though in less detail, about the Wend Slavs of the period. Plinius, the Roman geographer of the 1st cent. A.D., remarks briefly on the Slavs: "Some writers say that these *territories* (from the Baltic Sea—*Author*) up to the Vistula River are inhabited by the Sarmatians, the Wends, Skirs, Ghirs."<sup>2</sup> Tacitus, who is also poorly informed on the Slavs, similarly says: "Here ends the land of the Suebi. As to the Peucini, the Wends and the Finns, I doubt whether to classify them as Germans or Sarmatians."<sup>3</sup> Later Tacitus does not hesitate to classify the Wends as settled European peoples, who differ greatly from the Sarmatians. Ptolemy, the Alexandrian geographer (first half of the 2nd cent. A.D.), says that "Sarmatia is inhabited by numerous tribes: the Wends along the entire Wend Bay..."<sup>4</sup> But when the Eastern Roman Empire came into direct contact with the Slavs, Byzantine scholars too began to speak of the Slavs in the

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1958, Vol. II, p. 324.

<sup>2</sup> Nat. Hist. IV 97, *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, 1949, No. 2, p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> *Germania*, 46, *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, 1949, No. 3, p. 222.

<sup>4</sup> Ptol. Geogr. III, 5, 7, *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, 1948, No. 2, p. 236.

same way as Roman statesmen had spoken of the Germans. The fate of the ancient Germans and the ancient Slavs is similar in many respects. The "barbarian" onslaught on the Roman Empire came from the west, north and east, and was paralleled by the internal disintegration of the ancient slave-holding society.

It was a clash between two worlds, two systems: the decaying slave system on the one hand and, on the other, a young system which had all the prerequisites for further growth. The "barbarians" were victorious: they not only destroyed the old world, but built a new one.

What then was the source of "barbarian" strength? What had they actually achieved?

The strength of the "barbarians," which attracted the masses of the Roman people, lay in their social relations. These differed markedly from the slave system of the Roman Empire. A system which initially was a community of kinsmen and then of neighbours, offering its free members protection from internal and external dangers and providing a certain standard of material welfare, not only served as a bait for the dispossessed Roman masses, but also held great possibilities for progress.

In their homeland the "barbarians" developed a form of bondage that was milder than slavery, a "form which . . . is far superior to slavery. . ."<sup>1</sup>, and which enabled Europe to take a great stride forward, although the "barbarian" way of life was, on the whole, much more primitive than that of the civilized society of slave-owning Rome.

By that time, the Slavs had, like other European peoples, including the Germans, gathered sufficient strength to resist the constant threat of enslavement. They continued their struggle against the Eastern Roman Empire even after new "barbarian" states had come into being on the territory of the Western Roman Empire. The community system gave the Slavs similar opportunities for progress.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *op. cit.*, p. 306.



There had been clashes between the slave-owning world and the "barbarians" even before the time of the Germans and the Slavs. But their results were not so conclusive. Zhebelev and his pupils revealed these interesting facts relating to the history of the "barbarian" world. I have in mind his paper *The Last Perisade and the Scythian Uprising on the Bosphorus*.<sup>1</sup>

An inscription on a stone discovered in 1878 in the Chersonesus excavations in the Crimea has for a long time been an invaluable source for the study of the ancient history of the Russian South, and has been examined by many European scholars from every point of view. But only Zhebelev saw its import. At that time, two worlds existed side by side to the north of the Black Sea: the old slave-owning world and the new, communal world. A clash between them became inevitable, and Zhebelev was the first to note this cardinal fact in our history—the beginning of the end of our "ancient" history.

Zhebelev pointed out that the "withering away of the state of Bosphorus took place in stages, and was brought about not only by internal economic and political factors, but also by an external one, namely, "barbarian" pressure. These "barbarians," the Scythians, who had until then been exploited by slave-owning neighbours, became strong enough to found a state of their own in the Crimea, and began to resist their oppressors. They first occupied Olbia, then Chersonesus, and finally attacked Bosphorus. As a result, King Perisade of Bosphorus had to abdicate and seek protection from the slave-owning neighbour state of Pontus.

In the same document Zhebelev succeeded in deciphering an account of a slave uprising in Bosphorus—a clear indication of the class struggle and the impending crisis of the slave system.

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<sup>1</sup> С. А. Жебелев, Последний Перисад и скифское восстание на Боспоре („Вестник древней истории", № 3 (4), 1938). (S. A. Zhebelev, *The Last Perisade and the Scythian Uprising on the Bosphorus*. *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 3(4), 1938.)



The uprising achieved substantial but brief success. The insurgents even managed to proclaim their leader King of Bosporus. Mithradates Eupator, King of Pontus, retaliated drastically, but when faced with the task of saving his kingdom from Roman invasion, this man who had but recently suppressed the Scythians also realized that only the "barbarians" could save him and his kingdom. The *polis*—cities on the Black Sea coast—vied with one another in defection from their erstwhile defender and sided with slave-owning Rome. Mithridates freed slaves because he sided with the forces of the future. If this policy, nevertheless, fell short of expectations, it was because the "barbarians" were as yet incapable of pitting their forces against the slave-owners. Nevertheless, the wheel of history was turning in favour of the "barbarian" world, capable of breathing new life into moribund antiquity.

Zhebelev's studies have shown the highly complicated situation in which the southern slave-owning states existed. They were encircled by hostile tribes among whom the insurgent slaves sought support.

Papers by Zhebelev's pupils have carried forward the study of these processes. One of them presents interesting facts.<sup>1</sup> Appianus repeatedly mentions Mithridates' alliances with the "barbarians" who remained faithful allies of the Pontus Kingdom in its struggle against Rome.

The balance of forces in this struggle was evident: the slave-owning *polis*-cities sided with Rome, while the "barbarians" co-operated with Mithridates against the slave-owning states.

We find no Slavs here as yet—the sources mention the Scythians. But it is known that the term "Scythians" was a collective name applied to the numerous peoples in the south of our country. It is no accident that Kiev Rus was

<sup>1</sup> Д. П. Каллистов, Этюды из истории Боспора в римской период („Вестник древней истории", №2 (3), 1938, стр. 283). (D. P. Kallistov, *Essays on the History of Bosporus in the Roman Period. Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 2(3), 1938, p. 283.)

for a long time known among the Greeks as Scythia or Tauro-Scythia, with a remark now and then that these Tauro-Scythians called themselves Rus.

In the period between Antiquity and the Middle Ages, when the western part of the Roman Empire had already ceased to exist as an independent state, a bitter struggle was in progress between the Eastern Roman Empire and the oncoming Slavs. Until the early 7th century the Eastern Roman Empire continued to resist the Slavonic invasion of the Balkan Peninsula with temporary success. In 602, when Phocas became king, the "barbarians" were finally victorious. The struggle of the Western Roman Empire and Byzantium against the "barbarians" was carried on with similar methods and means. Initially, Byzantium resorted to arms, then, being forced to compromise, included "barbarians" as federal troops in her own forces and set aside land for them.

That same year, the army which fought against the Slavs mutinied. This clearly indicated an internal crisis in the slave-owning society of the Byzantine Empire. The Roman world with its antique slavery had reached an impasse. This was a time when the old slave system was dying and a new society was being born. Slavery, as Engels puts it, "could no longer..." while the labour of freemen "...could not yet, be the basic form of social production."<sup>1</sup> Systematic slave uprisings took place, accompanied by the victorious offensive of the "barbarians."

The fact that the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium) failed to survive this catastrophe, or rather survived it in part, was due only to its regeneration under the impact of the "barbarians." The Byzantine *Agricultural Law*, a memorial of the 8th century, leads us to conclude that the peasants, organized into a community, were victorious in the Byzantine village. Byzantium was "barbaricized"

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, op. cit., p. 301.



and began life anew.<sup>1</sup> Here, too, the Slavs played a decisive role in changing the Byzantine social system. Constantine Porphyrogenitus declares that "the entire Greek land was Slavonicized, became "barbarian" from the 8th century onwards.

Prof. Mishulin asserts that by that time the slave system in Byzantium "was already retreating into the past, while the population of the empire, thanks to the Slavs and their community system, took the road of a more rapid feudal development."<sup>2</sup>

Our historians also note similar processes in the south-east of the Byzantine Empire.

The disintegration of the slave system in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia on the eve of the Arab invasion is well depicted in Pigulevskaya's *Syrian Chronicle of Jeshu Stilitus*. Here too the ancient slave world was perishing as a result of internal decay under the pressure of the Arabs, a process followed by the mediaeval, feudal period.

There are grounds for including Transcaucasia, where similar phenomena occurred although in a more complex form, and where the Armenians and the Georgians in their struggle with the slave-owning world won conditions for more progressive feudal social relations. Manandyan has proved this thesis conclusively in relation to Armenia.<sup>3</sup>

The formation of "barbarian" states on the territory of the Roman Empire, both Eastern and Western, went on

<sup>1</sup> Е. Э. Липшиц, Византийское крестьянство и славянская колонизация ("Византийский сборник". М.—Л., 1945). (Y. E. Lipshits, *The Byzantine Peasantry and the Slav Colonization. Vizantiyskiy Zbornik*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945.)

<sup>2</sup> А. В. Мишулин, Древние славяне и судьбы Восточноримской империи ("Вестник древней истории", № 1, 1939, стр. 306). (A. V. Mishulin, *The Ancient Slavs and the Fate of the Eastern Roman Empire. Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 1, 1939, p. 306.)

<sup>3</sup> Я. А. Манандян, Проблема общественного строя доаршакидской Армении ("Исторические записки", т. XV). (Y. A. Manandyan, *Armenia's Social System in the Pre-Arshakid Period. Istoricheskie Zapiski*, Vol. XV.)



from the early 5th century A.D. The German states appeared somewhat earlier than the Slav, but their establishment was the result of one and the same process.<sup>1</sup>

The first vague reports of Slavonic states pertain to the 6th and 7th centuries: Czechia is mentioned in about the 7th century, and Bulgaria and Serbia in the middle of the same century. The first major Eastern Slav polity appears at about this time in the area close to the Carpathians, according to Arab reports and the Rus chronicle. We can also assume the existence of an alliance of the Antes.

In the period between moribund antiquity and nascent mediaevalism, in whose history they played a major role, the Eastern Slavs were in a state of transition from the tribal system to the class system. The new early mediaeval states arising partly on the very ruins of the ancient world and partly on territories outside it, were a great step forward in comparison with the slave system.

Ancient Rus largely resembled the Merovingian and Carolingian states in origin, structure and eventual fate. But each, of course, had its distinctive features which it is for the historian to study.

In order to get a firm grasp of the process which led to the formation of the largest Slavonic state in early mediaeval Europe, namely, Ancient Rus, we must examine the development of productive forces in the society of the Eastern Slavs from the earliest possible times, since the Eastern Slavs played a leading role in this process.

First of all, we should analyse the nature, system and methods of the economy, and the part played by its various branches in the period when the tribal system was disintegrating, class society being formed and the state emerging.

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<sup>1</sup> For details see Б. Д. Греков, *Борьба Руси за создание своего государства*, М.—Л. 1945. (B. D. Grekov, *Rus's Struggle for the Formation of Her Own State*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945.)

There is serious disagreement on this subject among scholars and I consider it necessary first of all to examine these differences.

The origin of Ancient Rus was already a subject for debate in the 18th century. While Prince Shcherbatov or August Ludwig von Schlözer were prepared to depict our 10th-century ancestors as "savages" almost akin to the apes, other students imagined these same ancestors to resemble enlightened Europeans of their own age. Shcherbatov pronounced Russia's ancient inhabitants to be "nomads." "Although there were towns in Russia before her baptism, these were more like encampments, for the people in general, and the nobility in particular, engaged in warfare and forays, and lived mostly in the fields, moving from place to place."<sup>1</sup> "Of course, the people were there," reasoned August Ludwig von Schlözer, "God knows since when and whence, but a people without government, who lived as the birds of the air and beasts of the forest."

Their views were opposed by Boltin, who pointed out that the Rus lived in a developed social and political system, and had towns and laws, knew the art of writing and had intercourse with other peoples.

In a slightly altered form this controversy passed to the 19th century and reached the 20th, when Kluchevsky, Dvornar-Zapolsky and Rozhkov, on the one hand, and on the other, Lyubavsky, Gauthier, Pokrovsky and others, were still debating the occupation of the Slavs and the basis of their economy during the earliest period of their existence. Gauthier and particularly Lyubavsky, and finally Pokrovsky insisted that agriculture was the basis of the ancient Slav economy, while Kluchevsky, Dvornar-Zapolsky and Rozhkov considered agriculture to be a secondary oc-

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<sup>1</sup> М. М. Щербатов, *История Российская*, т. I, СПб 1794, стр. 11, прим. (M. M. Shcherbatov, *A History of Russia*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1794, p. 11, Note.)

cupation and placed the hunting of fur-bearing animals in the forefront.

Bakhrushin occupied a position half-way between the two groups.<sup>1</sup> Strumilin recently attempted to disprove the view that agriculture was the most important branch of economy in Kiev Rus.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin believed that agriculture among the Slavs in the Dnieper area existed earlier, but began to play a leading role in the 11th century only (*Istoriĭ-Marxist*, No. 3, 1937, p. 168.)

<sup>2</sup> С. Г. Струмилин, К истории земледельческого труда в России („Вопросы экономики“, № 2, 1949). (S. G. Strumilin, *The History of Agriculture in Russia. Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 2, 1949.)

Unfortunately, the author failed to base his research on the well-known fact that bread was the Russian people's basic food at that time, and speculated on the impossibility of it having been produced in sufficient quantities owing to the imperfection of agricultural production methods.



### III. ANCIENT RUS AGRICULTURE



## 1. AGRICULTURE IN ANCIENT RUS ECONOMY

As a people with definite ethnic features, with social habits and economic practices Rus did not appear on the stage of history overnight. The people with all its peculiarities of language, skills, customs, and character was the result of an unbroken and prolonged ethnogenic and historical process.

The course taken by this process is not at all clear. But one thing is clear—that in the period first mentioned in our sources we find the Russian people with a culture of its own, beyond doubt deeply rooted in the remote past.

If we find the *smerd* a ploughman of humble social status, but have reason to assume that there was once a time when there were no classes at all, and people were just people, we infer that the *smerd's* chief occupation also has a history of its own.

We are able to present it concretely and conclusively enough, though with varying degree of clarity at every stage.

Today, a historian of the Russian people's economy cannot ignore the striking discoveries of the archaeologists. This applies above all to the successful studies of the Tripolye culture. It is a culture which existed on the territories around the Dniester and the Dnieper and dates back to the 3rd and 2nd millennia B.C. In other words, it is a pre-Scythian culture.



This area later became the cradle of Rus. We have no reason to doubt that the unknown tribes which inhabited this territory were genetically connected with Rus.

It was Khvoika who discovered traces of cultivated plants in the course of excavations of the Tripolye sites and suggested to the 13th Archaeological Congress the existence of agriculture in the Tripolye period.<sup>1</sup>

Today the study of the Tripolye culture has made very substantial progress, particularly after the works of Passek. His observations and conclusions on agriculture in the period of the Tripolye culture, i.e., in the 3rd and 2nd millennia B.C., are of paramount importance to me.

Excavations of the Kolomiishchina settlement have revealed that the clay mass used for building purposes contained an admixture of vegetative elements, namely, grains, chaff and tiny particles of ears of corn. Careful analysis proved these remains to be wheat, barley, rye and millet. Hence, the tribes which inhabited the Dniester and Dnieper basins were already acquainted with agriculture in pre-Scythian times. There is reason to believe that it was hoe culture. Agricultural implements are outstanding in the Kolomiishchina settlement. Hoes made of elk and deer horn have been found there; they have pointed edges and drilled holes for fastening handles. Implements made of soft rock were also used. Harvesting was done with the aid of knife-like flints, some of them crescent-shaped and with notched edges. In 1939, a sickle of considerable size, made of a shoulder-blade of a bull or cow, was discovered in the Kolomiishchina settlement.

The method of threshing has remained unknown to this day, but the method of treating grain has been well established.

<sup>1</sup> В. В. Хвойка. Начало земледелия и бронзовый век в Среднем Приднепровье („Труды XIII Археологического съезда в Екатеринославе“, 1905, т. I, М. 1907, стр. 1—8). (V. V. Khvoika, *Nascent Agriculture and the Bronze Age in the Middle Dnieper Areas. Trudy XIII Arkheologicheskogo Syezda in Yekaterinoslav*, 1905, Vol. I, Moscow, 1907, pp. 1-8.)

The most common was that of grinding the corn in a stone grinder consisting of two parts—a broad plate-like lower stone and a stone pusher. These grinders were usually found near large vessels intended for storage. Grinding was mostly done by women, as shown by the drawing of a woman crouched over a grinder discovered on the spot. Grain was stored in special vessels up to three feet high, standing in groups of 10-15 in a specially allotted place of the dwelling.

On the basis of his copious data Passek concludes that agriculture was the main economic activity. Cattle-breeding, hunting, and fishing played important, but secondary roles.<sup>1</sup>

It is self-evident that cattle-breeding was more conspicuous in the steppe coastal regions.

Archaeologists are now endeavouring to determine other periods in the history of Tripolye culture. There seems to be no evidence to contradict the assumption of continuity from Tripolye culture to Scythian culture.

Herodotus's description of Scythian agriculture is well known. "Their land," wrote Herodotus, "is a plain with abundant grass, and well irrigated. It is watered by the following rivers: the five-mouthed Istr (Danube), then the Tiras (Dniester), the Gipanis (Bug), Borysthenes (Dnieper), Pantikap, Gipakir, Gerr and Tanais (Don).<sup>2</sup> The Borysthenes River is the most useful. It brings the herds excellent and highly nutritious pastures, and excellent fish in great quantities; its water is very tasty and is the cleanest among the turbid rivers of Scythia; along its shores lies excellent arable land, or very tall grass grows where the land is not sowed; salt is deposited at its mouth; large

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<sup>1</sup> Т. С. Пасек, Трипільське поселення Коломиїщина („Трипільська культура“, т. I, Київ, 1940, стр. 34). (T. S. Passek, *The Tripolye Kolomiishchina Settlement*. Coll. *Tripilska Kultura*, Vol. I, Kiev, 1940, p. 34.)

<sup>2</sup> IV, 47, *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, 1947, No. 2, p. 266.



fish without a backbone, called sturgeon, are caught in it for salting."<sup>1</sup>

The land of the Scythians, according to Herodotus, produced corn, lentil, onions, garlic, flax and hemp; it had horses, oxen, donkeys, wild boars, deer, hares and goats. Herodotus also notes the existence of bees.

According to Herodotus, the Scythians were not an ethnic unit, but consisted of many tribes speaking different tongues. Nor was there any uniformity in the occupation of the population. Some of the tribes engaged in cattle-breeding, others were assiduously and profitably engaged in agriculture not only for their own use, but for sale as well. Some were nomads, while others were firmly settled.

Herodotus divides the Scythian ploughmen into two groups ἀροτῆρες and γεωργοί. In the 5th century B.C. population in the area between the Dnieper and the Southern Bug (the Paralaty) well knew the art of ploughing and the use of ploughing implements<sup>2</sup>, in contrast to the Skoloty, who lived on the left bank of the Lower Dnieper, and knew hoe culture only, which prompted Herodotus to name them tillers γεωργοί.

There are no grounds for believing that this agricultural knowledge, widespread both in the Tripolye period and Scythian times, was later forgotten by Rus and that Rus reverted to a state when agriculture was either totally unknown or inconspicuous.

It is therefore very difficult to understand why some students of Russian history regard the Eastern Slavs as a non-agricultural people. This idea was most clearly expressed by Kluchevsky, while his follower Rozhkov supplied the arguments which convinced Dovnar-Zapolsky and many others.

"The history of our society," Kluchevsky wrote, "would have been substantially different, had not our economy been

<sup>1</sup> IV, 53, *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, 1947, No. 2, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. The legend told by Herodotus about the plough and the yoke which fell from the skies and enabled the Scythians to grow corn.



for eight or nine centuries at variance with the nature of the country. In the 11th century, the bulk of the Russian population was concentrated in the Dnieper black-earth region, and by the mid-15th century it moved to the Upper Volga area. It would seem that in the former area, agriculture should have been the basis of the economy, while in the latter foreign trade, forestry and other industries should have gained the upper hand. But external circumstances were such that while Rus remained in the Dnieper black-earth territory she engaged predominantly in the sale of forest products and so on and began vigorously to plough on the loamy Upper Volga soils. As a result, both leading economic forces, namely, landownership by men-at-arms and urban trade took an artificial turn and failed to develop where natural conditions were most propitious, but where they developed with success, their achievements were artificial. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Our archaeologists and historians have long since noted the "artificial" nature of this reasoning, but many of our scholars persist in adhering to this prejudice.

It was Rozhkov who most strongly supported this contention. He attempted to prove it with an arsenal of documentary evidence, and this compels us to take a closer look at his arguments.

According to Rozhkov, far from being predominant, agriculture in Ancient Rus was not even a very important branch of the economy. "Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv, according to legend, inscribed in the *Initial Chronicle*, were trappers. The Severyane paid the Khazars tribute amounting to a squirrel skin per homestead. After conquering the Drevlyane in 883, Oleg set the tribute at one black marten per homestead. According to Ibn Khūrdādhbih, an Arab writer of the second half of the ninth century, the Russians exported the furs of the otter and the silver fox, i.e., the products

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<sup>1</sup> В. О. Ключевский, Боярская дума древней Руси, изд. 5, П. 1919, стр. 11. (V. O. Kluchevsky, *The Boyar Duma of Ancient Rus*, 5th ed., Petrograd, 1919, p. 11.)

of trapping. In 945, Igor, taking leave of the Byzantine envoys who had concluded a treaty with him, gave them gifts, which consisted of things in which he was rich, mainly furs. Princess Olga promised the Byzantine Emperor similar presents at the time of her baptism. She is represented as setting up *lovishcha*, i.e., traps for hunting wild beasts in the lands of the Drevlyane and Novgorod, and of *perevesishcha*, nets for fowling along the Dnieper and the Desna. . . . The Drevlyane who were besieged by Olga in Korosten, offered to pay tribute in *skora*, i.e., furs. According to Svyatoslav, one of the main riches of Rus were furs."<sup>1</sup>

Rozhkov goes on to refer to bee-keeping and fishing, supporting his reasoning with quotations from numerous sources. But it is impossible to agree with the author's theses. The legend of Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv is used incorrectly by Rozhkov. The chronicler gives three versions about them, and about the first in particular. The chronicler himself prefers the last, according to which Kiy was a prince who voyaged to Byzantium where he was "greatly honoured . . . by the king." We cannot but agree with the chronicler in this case—of the three versions, the assumption that Kiy was one of the princes among the Polyane, similar to those mentioned by Mauricius Strategicus or by the chronicler, is the more probable.

Hence, the assumption that the three brothers were "trappers" is highly questionable. Of course, the payment of tribute in furs shows that hunting was one of the main occupations. It also indicates the high value of furs which could only be the result of trade, i.e., demand for this product,<sup>2</sup> but it in no way prevents agriculture from being the main occupation of the population.

<sup>1</sup> Н. А. Рожков, Русская история в сравнительно-историческом освещении, т. I, М.—Л., 1930, стр. 81—82. (N. A. Rozhkov, *Comparative Studies in Russian History*, Vol. I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1930, pp. 81-82.) I quote Rozhkov as the author who has the most detailed argumentation.

<sup>2</sup> St. Marian, the founder of the monastery at Regensburg (in 1075), visited Kiev Prince Svyatoslav and from him and "from other nobles of the opulent city of Kiev received as presents valuable furs to the val-



Finally, it pays to examine the accepted interpretation of some of the too well-known places in the chronicle. Among these is the inscription for 859 which says that the "Khazars levied tribute on the Polyane, and on the Severyane, and on the Vyatichy, collecting a white squirrel skin per homestead."<sup>1</sup> Would it not be more correct, however, to read this text as it is set down in the *Ipaty Annals*, namely, "per byel<sup>2</sup> and squirrel skin," where "byel" may be understood to denote a silver coin? In that case our view of these tribes and the nature of the levy appears in a new light.<sup>3</sup>

To solve this problem we should above all study more carefully not the objects levied as tribute, but the unit itself. And that is a *dym*,<sup>4</sup> or *dom*,<sup>5</sup> *ralo*,<sup>6</sup> *plug*.<sup>7</sup> The *dym* or

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ue of 100 pounds of silver; carrying them away in carts, he safely returned with merchants to Regensburg." There the furs were sold and the proceeds used to build a monastery roof (*М. Э. Шайтан, Германия и Киев в XI в., "Летопись занятий археографической комиссии за 1927 г."* вып. 1 (34), стр. 22). (*M. E. Shaitan, Germany and Kiev in the 11th Century. Letopis Zanyatii Arkheograficheskoi Komissii for 1927, Issue 1 (34), p. 22.*)

<sup>1</sup> The chronicler over-estimates the role of the Khazars in Rus history. The predatory Khazar Khanate did subjugate some East Slav tribes, but only temporarily and loosely.

<sup>2</sup> *Byel*—white.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> The *Ipaty Annals* for 1257 say: "Danilo sent Konstantin to collect tribute from them (the Yatvyags); Konstantin went and collected the tribute: black *kunas* [*kunitsa*—marten—*Tr.*] and white silver, and gave it to him..." In the *Lawrenty Annals* for 1068 there is a story of the pillage of the household of Kiev Prince Izyaslav. "Innumerable quantities of gold and silver in *kunas* and white" were plundered (*Chronicle of Ancient Years, Part I, p. 115*).

Ibn Ruste writes: "White round dirhems reach them (the Bulgars—*Author*) from Moslem countries, in exchange for goods." *Д. Хвольсон, Известия о хазарах, буртасах, болгарях, мадьярах, славянах и русских Ибн-Даста, СПб 1869, стр. 25.* (*D. A. Khvolson, Information of Ibn Dast about the Khazars, Burtasy, Bulgars, Magyars, Slavs and Rus, St. Petersburg, 1869, p. 25.*) This requires special research. I merely assume on the strength of the terminology of Arab records and the analogy with the chronicle's report that the Vyatichy paid tribute in schillings ("schlyagi").

<sup>4</sup> *Dym*—smoke.—*Tr.*

<sup>5</sup> *Dom*—house.—*Tr.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ralo*—wooden plough.—*Tr.*

<sup>7</sup> *Plug*—plough.—*Tr.*



*dōm* is unquestionably a settled economy—a hearth, a homestead, an individual economy, since it is taxed as a separate economic unit.<sup>1</sup> The *ralo* and *plug* speak for themselves. In substance, all these terms denote one and the same unit of taxation based on agriculture.

In 964, the Vyatichy told Svyatoslav: "We pay the Khazars a *schlyag* per *ralo*." There is a similar instance somewhat later: in 981 Vladimir "conquered the Vyatichy and levied tribute per plough, as his father before him had done."<sup>2</sup> We have, it is true, a later interpretation of this agricultural unit of taxation. Helmold (12th century), discussing the Slavs of the Western Baltic, says that "the Obotrits have an episcopal tax, in lieu of the tithe, namely: from every plough, i.e., *from every two oxen or a horse (Author's italics)*, a measure of corn, 40 skeins of flax, 12 nummi of good coin (*XII nummi probatae monetae*)..."<sup>3</sup> Kedrin says the same of the Bulgarians: "Every Bulgarian who owned a pair of oxen had to pay (to Byzantium—*Author*) an annual measure of wheat, millet and a jar of wine." This applied to the period between 1018 and 1185, when Bulgaria was dependent on Byzantium.<sup>4</sup>

According to Gedeonov, the Wend princes received toll from the Wend *smerds*. "... *de quolibet aratro contulimus*" (Dreger, No. 29). This toll was called plough *poradlne* (cf. Maciejowsk. Sl. Rg. II, 270, Anm. 580).<sup>5</sup>

If the unit of taxation in a given society derives from the main ploughing implement we are clearly dealing with an agricultural society.

<sup>1</sup> This *dym-dom* has been discovered by V. I. Ravdonikas in Old Ladoga and no longer constitutes an enigma.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 964 and 981; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 47, 59.

<sup>3</sup> Helmold, *Chronica Slavorum*, liber I, *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, t. XX.

<sup>4</sup> Ф. И. Успенский, Образование второго Болгарского царства ("Записки Новороссийского университета", т. 27, Одесса 1879, стр. 113). (F. I. Uspensky, *The Formation of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom*. *Zapiski Novorossiiskogo Universiteta*, Vol. 27, Odessa, 1879, p. 113.)

<sup>5</sup> S. Gedeonov, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

This we can verify by comparison with the objects constantly being uncovered by the spade.

In this respect there is no disagreement among the archaeologists.

In his *Ancient Inhabitants of the Middle Dnieper and Their Culture in Prehistoric Times* Khvoika, the author who discovered agriculture in the Tripolye period, assesses the results of the large-scale excavation work along the Middle Dnieper—a region of special interest to us, since it was there that the centre of the Ancient Rus state was located. Khvoika speaks with assurance of the predominance of agriculture not only during the "Slav epoch" (Khvoika's term—*Author*) but also during much earlier periods, thus linking the Tripolye culture with the subsequent pre-Slav and Slav cultures. "We see therefore," Khvoika sums up, "that during the Slav epoch the inhabitants of the Middle Dnieper region were acquainted with many branches of production, but industries did not comprise the main occupation of the population. *Ultimately the main part was played by agriculture and cattle-breeding.* This is supported by the frequent discovery of agricultural implements—*iron plough blades, hoes, sickles, scythes, and other implements found in the strongholds and burial mounds of the period, as well as by the discovery of a vast quantity of grains of corn, which were often kept in special stores.* Whole layers of roasted corn grains—of *wheat, barley, rye and millet*—were often discovered in premises adjacent to living quarters in ancient dwellings razed by fire. These were often found in charred vats or barrels. In some cases—in the Sharkovskoye (Shargorod) stronghold, for example—the grain was discovered in special granaries adjacent to the living quarters. These granaries were round pits dug in the yellow subsoil and had an arched vaulted top with an opening; the sides of the pit were burned red."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> В. В. Хвойка, Древние обитатели Среднего Приднепровья и их культура в доисторические времена, Киев 1913, стр. 61. (V.V. Khvoika, *Ancient Inhabitants of the Middle Dnieper and Their Culture in Prehistoric Times*, Kiev, 1913, p. 61.) (Italics all mine.—*Author*.)



Khvoika dates the "Slav epoch" from the "great migration of the peoples."

The late K. A. Flyaksberger, our major authority on the history of cereals, presented abundant and conclusive material on the existence of various cereal crops in Eastern Europe dating back to very remote times. He examined the seeds of cultivated plants on the site of the 1928 Bantse-rovskoye stronghold excavations near Minsk, which dates back to the 6th-8th centuries. Most of the seeds were peas and *vicia faba* beans. The beans of this region, according to Flyaksberger, "are of local origin, and have been cultivated there for as long as 1,300 years." Large pieces of coagulated millet were also found. Finally, pots were found containing mixture of vetch (*vicia sativa*) and a few seeds of soft wheat (*Tr. vulgare*). "This means," Flyaksberger concludes, "that soft wheat had reached Minsk as early as the 6th and 8th centuries. It is interesting to note that no rye was discovered either here or near Smolensk at a much later period."<sup>1</sup>

This is also characteristic of other regions.

Tretyakov's 1934-35 excavations of a stronghold in the mouth of the Sonokhta River, which empties into the Volga about 12 miles below the mouth of the Sheksna River near the village of Bereznyaki, are of great interest. The settlement grew up about the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. It was destroyed by fire about the 4th-5th centuries. The stronghold consists of 11 buildings, five of which are dwelling huts, one a large public building, two premises connected with the production and treatment of metal, one a weaver's hut, one a store-room for keeping and grinding grain, and one a sepulchre.

The point of interest to us is that the inhabitants of this settlement lived on corn and were engaged in assartage

<sup>1</sup> К. Фляксбергер, Находки культурных растений доисторического периода („Труды Института истории науки и техники", серия I, вып. 2, стр. 177 и др.). (K. Flyaksberger, *Discoveries of Cultivated Plants in the Prehistoric Period. Trudy Instituta Istorii Nauki i Tekhniki*, Series I, Issue 2, p. 177 et al.)



farming. This is borne out not only by a special variety of corn hut, but also by such implements as special axes for cutting trees, sickles and corn grinders. It was impossible to determine just what kind of crops were grown. But circumstantial evidence points to the cultivation of flax, from which linen was woven. Side by side with agriculture there are also clear traces of other forms of economic activity—hunting, fishing, mining, metal-working, spinning, pottery, wood-carving, etc. This was a clan community with a varied economy.<sup>1</sup>

Tretyakov does not limit his investigations to Bereznyaki. He has excavated many later settlements (7th-9th centuries) in the Upper Volga region. He concludes that agriculture held undisputed sway in the region, and that the nature of this agriculture was undergoing a gradual change. Grubbing, i.e., *pre-sokha* agriculture gradually gave way to *sokha* agriculture, to ploughing. The *sokha* fitted with an iron blade was preceded by the *ralo*. The horse which had served as food became a draught animal and rarely served as food after that. The author dates this turning-point in agricultural methods, i.e., the transition from assartage to ploughing at approximately the 7th-8th centuries. He simultaneously notes the change in the form of settlements. Strongholds are replaced by non-fortified but much larger settlements while clan communities give place to communities based on mutual economic interests.

I will not dwell on the ethnic nature of these settlements, since it is of secondary importance at the moment.

In 1929, a Ukrainian archaeologist, A. Fedorovsky, discovered the Donetsk Stronghold about four miles from Kharkov, near the village of Karachevka, on the right bank of the Uda River. It is of later origin—about the 11th-

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<sup>1</sup> П. Н. Третьяков, К истории племен Верхнего Поволжья в первом тысячелетии н. э. („Материалы и исследования по археологии СССР“ № 5, М.—Л. 1941, стр. 51 и сл.) (P. N. Tretyakov, *History of the Upper Volga Tribes in the 1st millennium A. D. Materialy i Issledovaniya po Arkheologii SSSR*, No 5, Moscow-Leningrad, p. 51 et seq.)

12th centuries. It is not assartage we find there, but real plough agriculture. Fedorovsky discovered a wide assortment of cereals (millet, rye, soft and hard wheat, barley, buckwheat), as well as flax and poppies. He also discovered millstones, a grain grinder, and four sickles. He particularly stressed in his report that the entire surface of the settlement was dotted with pits of varying depth intended for grain storage. He examined about 80 of these pits, but more remain, because the excavations are not completed.

The sides of the pits are carefully evened off, and there are traces of spade-work, of clay and lime, and of the birch and pine bark with which they were once lined. Charred corn grains were discovered in many. *Russkaya Pravda* and the chronicle mention similar corn pits.<sup>1</sup> Fedorovsky includes them in the earliest strata of his excavations of the 11th-12th centuries. He explains their great number by the fact that they could be used for a limited time only, owing to the pests who bred there and spoiled the corn; the pit had then to be abandoned and a new one dug. It is possible that the author's surmise is correct, but we must draw another conclusion: we have proof here of the predominance of agriculture in the region as a whole, and in this settlement in particular. It should be impossible otherwise to account for the existence of such pits and their numbers. The assortment of cereals points to the same conclusion.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, agriculture existed in the area for a long time, and centuries were needed for the development of the cereals mentioned. Present-day as well as earlier excavations prove that Fedorovsky's discoveries were not ex-

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<sup>1</sup> "If they steal corn from the threshing-floor or from the pit..." (*Russkaya Pravda*, Karamzin Copy, Art. 40).

<sup>2</sup> А. Федоровский, Археологічні розкопи в околицях Харкова („Хроніка археології та мистецтва“, ч. 1, Всеукраїнська Академія Наук, Київ, 1930, стр. 5—10). (A. Fedorovsky, *Excavations on the Outskirts of Kharkov. Khronika Arkheologii ta mistetstva*, Part 1, Ukrainian Academy of Science, Kiev, 1930, pp. 5-10.)



ceptions, and that the Kharkov region is not alone in this respect.

From his excavations of the Severyane burial mounds Samokvasov long ago reached conclusions corroborating Fedorovsky's observations and the accounts of the chronicles. There too, the presence of sickles and the assortment of cereals indicate, Samokvasov believes, the agricultural occupations of the Severyane.<sup>1</sup> Gamchenko and Antonovich arrive at similar conclusions, the former on the basis of his excavations around Stuga,<sup>2</sup> and the latter of the Drevlyane burial mounds.<sup>3</sup> Excavations of the Raiki settlement (six miles from Berdichev) lend additional support to this. They are noteworthy, because they yield objects which were not accidentally preserved but comprise a full set of household utensils of a settlement destroyed in some cataclysm in the early 13th century. There is a complete set of agricultural implements: ploughshares of different types, sickles, scythes, hobbles for horses, a wide variety of cereals: millet, oats, rye, peas, vetch, as well as hemp and poppy. A large number of cylindrical locks indicates a society with a well-developed institution of private property and its attendant inequalities and specific crimes.<sup>4</sup> We have a similar situation in the so-called Knyazhaya Gora—a settlement which archae-

<sup>1</sup> Д. Я. Самоквасов, Северянские курганы и их значение для истории („Труды III Археолог. съезда в России“, т. I, Киев 1878, стр. 219 и др.). (D. Y. Samokvasov, *The Severyane Burial Mounds and Their Historical Significance. Trudy III Arkheologicheskogo Syezda*, Vol. I, Kiev, 1878, p. 219, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> „Чтения в Историческом обществе Нестора летописца“, кн. 13, отд II, Киев 1899, стр. 31 и др. (*Lectures to the Nestor Historical Society*, Kiev, 1899, Book 13, Section II, p. 31 et seq.)

<sup>3</sup> В. Б. Антонович, Древности Юго-Западного края („Материалы по археологии России“, № 11, СПб 1893, стр. 15). (V. B. Antonovich, *The Antiquities of the South-West Territory. Materialy po Arkheologii Rossii*, No. 11, St. Petersburg, 1893, p. 15.)

<sup>4</sup> Ф. Н. Молчановский, Обработка металла на Украине в XII-XIII вв. по материалам Райковецкого городища („Проблемы истории докапиталистических обществ“, № 5, 1934, стр. 83-92). (F. N. Molchanovsky, *The Treatment of Metals in the Ukraine in the 12th-13th Centuries in the Raiki Stronghold. Problemy Istorii Dokapitalisticheskikh Obshchestv*, No. 5, 1934, pp. 83-92.)



ologists attribute to the 11th-12th centuries. Various implements of production were found there, with agricultural objects, including ploughs (177), predominating.

Lyavdansky, a student of the Kovsharovskoye stronghold (Smolensk region), is convinced that there was agriculture there in the 11th-13th centuries: "The main occupation of the inhabitants was agriculture." This is strikingly supported by the charred grains, mainly barley (2-3 varieties), some oats (1-2 varieties) and also wheat, hoes, sickles and millstones discovered on the site. No remains of the *sokha* have been discovered, but it undoubtedly existed. Flax was also grown: prints of linen have been well preserved on burnt clay. Horticultural crops unquestionably also existed, but have not been preserved. There were also domestic animals, such as the horse, cow, sheep, pig, dog, etc. Their bones were found in the stronghold. Flyaksberger<sup>1</sup> examined the grains found there and concluded that spring crops were most common, above all barley. But he also stresses that the absence of rye prevented him from making a more definite statement on agriculture in the area. Of course, the absence of more specific data on the *sokha* and winter crops (if it is not accidental) leads us to suppose the existence of a more primitive system of agriculture than in either the

<sup>1</sup> К. Фляксбергер, Хлебные зерна из Ковшаровского городища, Гриневской волости, Смоленского уезда („Научные известия Смоленского госулар. университета“, общ.-гуман. науки, т. III, вып. 3, Смоленск 1926, стр. 250—251). (К. Flyaksberger, *Corn Grains from the Kovsharovskoye Stronghold, Grinev Volost, Smolensk Uyezd. Nauchniye Izvestia Smolenskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. III, Issue 3, Smolensk, 1926, pp. 250-251.) Also see by the same author: „Находка культурных растений доисторического периода“ („Труды Института истории науки и техники Академии наук“ сер. 1, вып. 2). (*Discoveries of Cultivated Plants in the Prehistoric Period. Trudy Instituta Istorii Nauki i Tekhniki of the Academy of Sciences*, Series I, Issue 2); „Археологические находки хлебных растений в областях, прилегающих к Черному морю“ („Краткие сообщения о докладах и полевых исследованиях Института истории материальной культуры“, VIII, М.—Л. 1940, стр. 117-119). (*Archaeological Discoveries of Cereals in Black Sea Coastal Areas. Brief Reports on Field Studies of the Institute of the History of Material Culture*, VIII, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, pp. 117-19.)

Kiev or Volga-Kama areas, where iron ploughshares were found in 10th-century layers, or in Novgorod itself. But Lyavdansky does not doubt that the *sokha* with an iron blade was used in the Smolensk region during the 11th century.<sup>1</sup>

We find something similar in the area inhabited by the Radimichy, thoroughly studied by Rybakov. After examining almost 150 burial mounds, he is convinced that agriculture was the main occupation of the Radimichy and that they tried to occupy the more fertile black-earth sections of the area. No indications of hunting were found in the mounds.

According to Rybakov, not only cereals, but also industrial crops, primarily flax, were grown. The tribute of one pelt per homestead paid by the Radimichy is an indication that the hunting done by them was negligible.

The position of those who hold that hunting predominated in the area inhabited by the Radimichy is not strengthened by the fact (which they usually cite) of the payment of tithes in fox skins to the Bishop of Smolensk in 1150, because even in the 16th century, when there can be no doubt about the existence of agriculture in the area, the Mozyr ruler continued to collect honey and "a fox skin per homestead."

It is true that no metal ploughshares were found relating to the period from the 10th to the 12th centuries, although axes, sickles and S-shaped scythes abound. It could be said, then, that assartage was predominant, an assumption which accords with our conception of the Radimichy and the Vyatichy being backward in comparison with other Eastern Slavonic tribes. The chronicler's picturesque description of these forest-dwellers who lived as the "birds and beasts of the forest" is well known. But it is important to note that Rybakov did not investigate Radimichy strongholds, but only their burial mounds. His studies of the Dre-

<sup>1</sup> A. N. Lyavdansky, *A Few Facts About the Strongholds of Smolensk Province*. *Nauchniye Izvestia Smolenskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. III, Issue 3, p. 247.



govichy, who had not outstripped the Radimichy in their development, enable us to assert that plough farming, or in any case a higher form of assartage, existed among the Dregovichy in the 9th century if not earlier.<sup>1</sup>

Recent excavations by Ravdonikas on the border between the Novgorod lands and Karelia show that agriculture played a similar role even in that Northern region.

His excavations in Old Ladoga have yielded similar results. The population of Old Ladoga subsisted on corn as early as the 8th century. It used domesticated animals for food and lived in separate homesteads (*dym*) with individual economies.

The animal remains found on the site are very revealing. First place is occupied by the swine (42 per cent of bones collected in 1938 and 46 per cent in 1939), then come cattle (26 per cent in 1938 and 28.1 per cent in 1939), and sheep and goats, with the former predominating, (12 per cent in 1938 and 14 per cent in 1939). All these animals were used for food. For this reason the percentage of bones collected approximately coincides with the ratio of the herds. Then we have the horse (4 per cent in 1938, and 5.6 per cent in 1939), the domestic cat (10 per cent in 1938), the dog (6 per cent in 1938 and 4 per cent in 1939) and, finally, the hen (11 per cent in relation to the various species of the entire flock).

Discoveries of hunting implements (arrow-heads and spears, and the wooden bows in Repnikov's collection) indicate the importance of hunting in Ladogan economy, a fact underlined by the study of the remains of wild fauna. The ratio of domestic to wild animals is not without interest. Among 59 mammal species whose remains were collected in 1938 we have 84.8 per cent domestic animals and 15.2 per cent wild, and in 1939—of 308 species 87.7 per cent were domestic animals, and 12.3 per cent wild. Of course, not all the wild animals killed by hunters were

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<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *Radzimichy. Pratsi Arkheologichnai Komisii*, Vol. III.



brought to the settlement; furthermore, the remains do not include bone and horn carvings (articles of elk horn are very numerous, and even the tusks of the bear, which is not represented among the remains, have been found), but the average of 88 per cent for domestic and 12 per cent for wild animals undoubtedly gives a good indication of the balance between cattle-breeding and hunting in Ladogan economy during the 9th and 10th centuries.

The wild animals may be classified as follows: the beaver leads with 44 per cent in the 1938 collections and 42.1 per cent in 1939, which reminds us of the "beaver haunts" of the Ancient Rus sources; then come the fox (22.2 per cent in 1938 and 16 per cent in 1939); the hare (11 per cent in 1938 and 13.1 per cent in 1939); the elk (11.1 per cent in 1938 and 10.5 per cent in 1939; the figures for the elk should be increased), and the wolf (1 per cent in 1938, and 1 per cent in 1939). In addition, the seal (4 animals—10.5 per cent), the red deer and the lynx—one each, were discovered in the collections of 1939.

Birds, among them primarily the forest hen family (i.e., the wood grouse, heath-cock, and the hazel hen) and waterfowl—the duck and goose family are more abundant and varied in the wild fauna than the mammals. Evidently, the *perevesishcha* were widely used in the hunt by the Ladogans.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the existence of the cultivation of land and the stock-breeding closely allied to it, is fully demonstrated by this data.

Linguistics proves that in the earliest days the Slav language had terms to denote cereals, vegetables and agricultural implements.

It is very important to recall that Hungarian agricultur-

<sup>1</sup> В. Н. Равдоникас, Старая Ладога ("Советская археология", М.—Л. 1949, вып. XI, стр. 5—54). (V. I. Ravdonikas, *Old Ladoga, Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, Issue XI, pp. 5-54.) More than 7,000 bones were collected in 1938 and 1939. They were analysed at the Zoological Institute of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences by Suslova under the direction of V. I. Gromova.

al terminology is of Slav origin, while the cattle-breeding terminology is of native origin.

Archaeological and linguistic data coincide with the information contained in the earliest *Russkaya Pravda*. A wergild collector was entitled to "take seven pails of malt per week, also a sheep, or half a carcass, or two *nogatas*<sup>1</sup> and for Wednesday a *rezana* or (three) cheeses; the same for Friday. And bread as much as can be eaten, and groats; and two hens per day; also four horses at his disposal and as much oats as they can eat." Later on there is another explanation about the food-stuffs for the wergild collector and his assistants: "Rye flour as much as they can eat." We have here the usual food-stuff allowance for a collector of taxes and fines. On the other hand, any deviation from this standard reveals the priority of corn. An extreme shortage of food is usually expressed in such cases as a change to bread and water. Antony of Pechera "ate dry bread, and that every other day, and drank some water."<sup>2</sup>

There can be no doubt that we are dealing with a society whose production is primarily based on agriculture. The people's staple food is bread, while that of horses is oats; and the quantities of these products are apportioned exclusively according to the appetite of the consumer—an indication of their abundance.

The word *obiliye* in our ancient writings denotes primarily an abundance of bread, food-stuffs. For, when there was once a famine in Rostov Region there appeared two soothsayers from Yaroslavl, saying: "We know who hides the *obiliye*."<sup>3</sup> Later it transpires that *obiliye* means mainly bread. In the will of Kliment of Novgorod (13th century) we read: "In return for all that, I give two villages with

<sup>1</sup> In the 11th century 1 *grivna* equalled 20 *nogatas*, or 25 *kunas* or 50 *rezanas*. In the 12th century 1 *grivna* equalled 20 *nogatas*, or 50 *kunas*.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, St. Petersburg, 1871, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> *Lawrenty Annals* for 1071; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 117.



*obiliye*, and with the horses, and with the beehives.”<sup>1</sup> That the chronicler makes the envoys of the Slavs tell Rurik and his brothers that “our land is vast and abundant”—is certainly a reference to the fertility of the soil and the extensive development of agriculture.

*Russkaya Pravda* does not deem it necessary to explain what was plain to its contemporaries. But its silence can often be construed as an indication that agriculture was the chief occupation. How are we to understand the statement in *Russkaya Pravda* that the rich possessed *chelyad*?<sup>2</sup> What work did these *chelyad* do on the lord's estate?

Those who are convinced that our ancestors were engaged in “hunting and trade” must inevitably assume that these *chelyad* roamed the forests with bow and arrow shooting squirrel and marten in order to provide furs for their master who awaited the return of the *chelyad* and prepared boats for shipping the furs to far-off foreign markets.

Those who maintain that the men-at-arms of the period subsisted on the tribute of conquered peoples and were concerned neither with the soil nor the economy will find it impossible to explain the existence of *chelyad* who would then be superfluous.

Those, on the other hand, who consider this view contradictory to all our records, and who consider the chief occupation of our ancestors to have been agriculture (grub and plough), must inevitably conclude that the *chelyad* were primarily used for tilling the soil, and sustained their lord and master with their agricultural labours. This is shown clearly (though for a somewhat later period, it is true) in the *Life of Feodosy of Pechera*, where it is said that his parents' *chelyad* were, mainly, if not exclusively, used for work in the fields. This conclusion is fully supported by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, where the estate with its

<sup>1</sup> М. Ф. Владимирский-Буданов, Хрестоматия по истории русского права, вып. 1, изд. 5, СПб—Киев 1899, стр. 137. (M. F. Vladimirovsky-Budanov, *A Reader on the History of Russian Law*, Issue 1, 5th ed., St. Petersburg-Kiev, 1899, p. 137.)

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. V, 2.—Tr.



agriculture is described with such clarity that it can be missed only by those who want to ignore it. It is impossible to evade the problem of when this estate emerged, for by the 11th century we find it as a large landholding, completely based on agriculture. Such processes are reckoned in centuries, not decades.

It is pertinent, I believe, to recall the practice of the Byzantine Government, earlier noted by Academician Uspensky, of transferring Slav colonies to Asia Minor. In 687, for example, there is mention of such a transfer of Slavs from Macedonia to the Opsikios region in Bithynia. About 208,000 Slavs were transferred to Asia Minor at about the mid-8th century. *All of them were given land in Bithynia*, near the Sangaria River. "The Slavs, settled in Asia Minor, were allotted landholdings and placed in a position which would enable them to discharge military service."<sup>1</sup> Byzantium had no doubts about the Slavs being farmers, and as early as the 7th-8th centuries created for them the conditions to which they were accustomed.

This is also indicated by the *Agricultural Law* which undoubtedly reflects the peculiarities of Slav economy and social system.<sup>2</sup>

Vladimir Monomakh's classic description of the *smerd*-farmer at the Dolob Congress in 1103 is well known. He describes the *smerd* as a small producer who owns agricultural implements, a farmstead, as well as live and dead stock, etc. The *smerds*, who comprised the bulk of the population of Kiev and Novgorod Rus, were mainly farmers.

This makes Princess Olga's address to the Drevlyane, inscribed in the *Lavrenty Annals* for 946 (the fact that the chronicler has adorned his tale with details taken partly from contemporary life is of no great significance) quite

<sup>1</sup> Ф. И. Успенский, История Византийской империи, т. I, СПб 1913, стр. 398—399. (F. I. Uspensky, *A History of the Byzantine Empire*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1913, pp. 398-99.)

<sup>2</sup> Y. E. Lipshits, *The Byzantine Peasantry and the Slav Colonization*, based mainly on the *Agricultural Law*. *Vizantiisky Zbornik*, 1945, pp. 106-14.

comprehensible: "All your towns have delivered themselves unto me and are paying tribute, and are working in the corn fields and tilling the soil, while you want to die of hunger."

We have sufficient information on the subject of famine which proves conclusively that agriculture was the chief occupation of the rural population. "That same year the water rose greatly in the Volkhov, and snow lay on the ground until Yakov's day, and in autumn the frost killed all the *obiliye*: and there was famine throughout the winter and rye was half a *grivna* an *osminka*."<sup>1</sup> "There was intense heat for two weeks just before the harvest; then it began to rain, and there was not a clear day until the winter; and much corn and hay was not brought in. . . ."<sup>2</sup> "That very year there was a drought all summer, and all the corn was burned and in autumn the frost killed all the spring corn; and for our sins was the winter also very warm and it rained and thundered; and a small vat cost 7 *kunas*. O, great was the sorrow and need among the people."<sup>3</sup> "That very autumn it rained heavily day and night on the Lord's Day and even unto Nikola's Day; the people could not make hay, neither could they work in the corn fields."<sup>4</sup> "On the Day of the Founding of the Holy Cross the frost killed the *obiliye* in our *volost* and from that time on, our sorrow was great again: we had to buy corn at 8 *kunas*, and rye at 20 *grivnas* per vat, and at 30 in the households, and wheat was 40 *grivnas*, and millet groats at 50, and oats at 13 *grivnas*, and many of our people left the town and *volost*, and foreign towns and lands were full of our brethren, while the rest began to die."<sup>5</sup>

There can no longer be any doubt that a crop failure constituted a national calamity: it was not only the villages

<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals* for 1127. *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, for 1145, and p. 213.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, for 1161, and p. 218.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, for 1228, and p. 272.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, for 1230, and p. 277.



which were hit by it, but the towns-folk also experienced "great grief and want" if the corn crops failed for some reason.

The greatest attention should be paid to the differentiation in our early records between winter and spring crops. This points to stable plough farming, very possibly of the three-field system, as early as the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>1</sup>

At first glance it may seem that all these facts apply only to the 11th and 12th centuries, and that things were different at an earlier period (9th and 10th centuries). These doubts are eliminated by the testimony of foreigners and archaeological data which fully support our earliest written records. A Hebrew traveller of the 10th century, Ibn Yakub, reports that "the land of the Slavs (meaning the Western and partly the Eastern Slavs) abounds in every kind of vital stock, that the Slavs are an industrious people and are engaged in agriculture more assiduously than any other people." Eastern documents bear witness to the fact that Slavonic flax was shipped to Central Asia via Derbent in substantial quantities.<sup>2</sup> The *Lavrenty Annals* for the year 997 contain an account relating to the siege of Bel-

<sup>1</sup> P. P. Smirnov in his *Образование Русского централизованного государства в XIV—XV вв.* (*Formation of the Russian Centralized State in the 14th and 15th Centuries*) writes: "It is hard to agree with Grekov that the three-field system was in use in the Novgorod area in the 12th century. The chronicle's mention of "ozimishche" (the text says "ozimitsa") and spring corn indicates autumn and spring sowing only, but neither the three nor the two-field systems" (*Voprosy Istorii*, No. 2-3, 1946, p. 73, Note 6). If the Novgorodites had autumn and spring crops it is more logical to assume the existence of the three or two-field systems, than to reject the one and the other. This idea merits more than a flat negation. I consider the objections to P. P. Smirnov's theory, particularly those advanced by I. I. Smirnov in his "О путях исследования русского централизованного государства" (*Methods of Studying the Russian Centralized State*), (*Voprosy Istorii*, No. 4, 1946), to be entirely convincing.

<sup>2</sup> А. Ю. Якубовский, Рассказ Ибн-ал Биби... („Византийский временник", т. XXV, Л. 1928, стр. 74). (A. Y. Yakubovsky, "Ibn-al-Bibi's tale...", *Vizantiiskiy Vremennik*, Vol. XXV, Leningrad, 1928, p. 74.) Б. Д. Греков и А. Ю. Якубовский, Золотая орда и ее падение, М. 1950, стр. 21. (B. Grekov and A. Yakubovsky, *The Golden Horde and its Decline*, Moscow, 1950, p. 21.)



gorod. An old man suggested that the besieged inhabitants collect "from everyone at least a handful of oats, or wheat, or bran" in order to prepare a well full of jelly and deceive the enemy. It was taken for granted that the majority of the population had these products even during a siege designed to take the town by hunger. Mauricius Strategicus reports that the Slavs and the Antes had large quantities of various kinds of cattle and fruits of the earth, particularly varieties of millet and wheat (κέγγρος καὶ ἕλωμος) which were heaped on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

In the 9th century the *ralo* (or *plug*) is not simply mentioned as existing among the Vyatichy, as Rozhkov emphasized; it was the basic unit of taxation. In *Extensive Pravda* wheat, corn, peas, millet, spelt and barley are named among the agricultural products; in *Kirik's Inquiry* we find peas, lentils, wheat and vegetables. The Canons of the Church relating to the mid-11th century say: "If one steals hemp, or flax, or any kind of corn...." The Arab Ibn Ruste (first half of the 10th century) tells of harvesting among the Slavs and hints that agricultural products were the chief means of subsistence ("they liked millet above all"—a fact also mentioned by Mauricius and Leo the Wise). Menander, a Byzantine writer of the 6th century, reports that the Antes had fields which were laid waste by Byzantine troops. Corn and meat, according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, was the usual Slav sacrifice and, therefore, a very ancient food, because sacrificial ritual is a tradition sanctified by age-old custom.

We should also note that centuries of development were needed for agriculture to appear in the 11th century with all the cereal and industrial crops mentioned by written sources and revealed by archaeology. Every one conversant with the cultivation of fibre flax will realize that centuries were required to develop the Slav flax suitable for weaving, which, according to Eastern records, was exported

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<sup>1</sup> *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, Vol. 2, Moscow-Leningrad, pp. 34, 36.

in substantial quantities to Central Asia via Derbent in the 9th century. The same can be said of our other ancient crops.

Facts pertaining to the pre-Christian religion of the Slavs indicate a predominantly agricultural cult. The Sun and the Earth, the two chief deities in any agricultural cult, were among the Slav gods. They even considered themselves the "grandsons of Dazhbog," and called the Earth their mother. The early history of Christianity in Rus proves once again the agricultural nature of Slav economy in the 9th-10th centuries. The syncretic religion which resulted in the acceptance of Christianity bore practically no trace of totemism, which would be essential to the Kluchevsky-Rozhkov concept. Totemism no longer existed in the religion of the Antes by the 6th century, as described by Procopius of Caesarea.

Christian concepts and ideas were perceptibly amended by the elements of an agricultural cult: spring was turned into the Mother of God who arrives on a *rado* at the time of the Annunciation; the saints Ilya, Yegory and Nikola became the patron saints of agricultural labours and the farmer's right-hand men. Nikola, above all, was one who "gives birth to corn," "sows spring crops," "sows peas," and is "the first god" of the fields.<sup>1</sup> It is the Slav custom to pray in an *ovin*<sup>2</sup>, etc.<sup>3</sup> We find similar customs among the Prussians, the closest neighbours of the Eastern Slavs. Protesting against the spread of Christianity among them, they tell the missionaries that because of them the Pruss land will cease giving crops, the trees will cease to bear fruit, and the animals offspring.<sup>4</sup>

The Slav calendar, which originated in tribal times when

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<sup>1</sup> М. Н. Никольский, История русской церкви, изд. 2, М.—Л. 1931, стр. 50 и др. (M. N. Nikolsky, *A History of the Russian Church*, 2nd ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1931, p. 50, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ovin*—barn.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> ДАИ, т. I, СПб 1846, № 1, стр. 1 (*Addenda to Historical Acts*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1846, No. 1, p. 1.)

<sup>4</sup> Э. Лависс, Очерки по истории Пруссии, М. 1915, стр. 83. (E. Laviss, *Outline of Prussian History*, Moscow, 1915, p. 83.)



grub farming was predominant, likewise proves that the ancient Slav economy was based on agriculture. The Slavs divided time into periods corresponding to the rotation of agricultural work and determined these periods by the moon. The first month in which trees were cut down for burning was called *sechen*<sup>1</sup>; the second month when the felled trees were dried, was called *sukhy*<sup>2</sup>; the third, when the felled trees were turned into ashes, was called *beryo-zo-zol*<sup>3</sup>; the fourth was called *traven*<sup>4</sup>; then came *kveten*<sup>5</sup>; *serpen*<sup>6</sup>; *vresyen* (from *vreshchi*—to thresh). It is clear what economic circumstances gave rise to such a calendar.

There can be no doubt in assessing these facts because we find similar phenomena among other agricultural peoples. Thus, among the Chuvashi, an agricultural people, the names of the months in their Russian translation denote: the month of the *par*, i.e., when the soil lies fallow, the month of manuring, the month of haying, the month of haystacking, the month of the sickle, the month of reaping, the month of picking flax, the month of threshing, the month of the *ovin*, etc. We see a similar situation among the Cheremisy (the Mari). Dulourier and Manandyan point out that the Armenians also divided their year in accordance with the cycle of agricultural work.

On the other hand, those peoples among whom cattle-breeding prevailed for a long time, denote their months, as Kazakhs do, for example, the month when sheep yearn; the month when mares are milked for the koumiss, the month of sheep shearing, the month when cattle are slaughtered for the winter stocks, etc.

The names of the months among the Yakuts bear witness to their concern with fishing: the month when the ice melts, the month of the spawn, etc.

<sup>1</sup> *Sechen*—a derivative of *sech*—to cut down.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sukhy*—dry.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> *Beryoza*—birch; *zola*—ashes.—*Tr.*

<sup>4</sup> *Traven*—a derivative of *trava*—grass.—*Tr.*

<sup>5</sup> *Kveten*—a derivative of *tsvet*—bloom.—*Tr.*

<sup>6</sup> *Serpen*—a derivative of *serp*—sickle.—*Tr.*



The same can be said of religion and religious rites. Among the Chuvashi, the New Year, coinciding with the second half of March and early April (i.e., with the beginning of agricultural work) was considered to be a festival of the "plough's marriage" where the earth was the bride. A similar "festival of the plough" exists among the Mari and the Kazan Tatars. Chronologically, the second festival was the "invocation of rain." Then came a period when the Chuvashi and the Mari considered the earth to be pregnant and protected it against every disturbance (digging, ploughing, throwing weights on the ground). This festive period corresponds among the Great Russians to the period when it was "mother earth's name-day." Such festivals and rituals accompanied the entire agricultural cycle.

Grushevsky believes that the contradictions in the testimonies of Byzantine writers on the state of agriculture among the Slavs were due to the fact that these authors came into contact with Slav border settlements where the colonizing movement went on amidst constant dangers and made the population lag behind the more civilized Slavs living far away from the Byzantine frontier. "Those who witnessed the Slavs in normal circumstances, in well-settled places," says Grushevsky, "testify to their well-developed agriculture which left a deep impression on every aspect of Slav life." "It is true," he goes on, "that these sources are of later date—the 10th and even the 11th centuries—but such an extensive development of agriculture indicates that it was no new phenomenon, but rather a very ancient cultural achievement."<sup>1</sup>

Grushevsky does not clarify the issue by allowing two causes (lack of knowledge of Slav agriculture in "settled areas," and divergence in the records of different periods) for the "contradictions" in Byzantine sources.

If earlier writers discuss Slav agriculture in very mod-

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<sup>1</sup> М. Грушевский, *Історія України-Руси*, т. 1, изд. 2, Львов, 1904, стр. 218. (M. Grushevsky, *A History of Ukraine-Rus*, Vol. 1, 2nd ed., Lvov, 1904, p. 218.)

est terms (Procopius goes so far as to assert that "both peoples<sup>1</sup> live in poor, scattered huts and often migrate"), while later authors present a picture of genuine plough farming, should we not view this as an advance in Slav agricultural techniques, with all the consequences ensuing therefrom?

Thus, all the available facts contradict the Kluchevsky-Rozhkov assertion that agriculture was not predominant in Ancient Rus and that it was not even a very important branch of the economy. Rozhkov's reasoning, it will be remembered, is based on the fact that corn is not mentioned at all among the goods which comprised Rus's main wealth, but only the "products of the extractive industry—furs, honey and wax." Rozhkov is right in saying that the "wealth of the princes, boyars and merchants did not consist in corn," but that does not prove his main point. Corn became prominent on the home market and to some extent also on the foreign market following changes in the economic life of the whole of Europe, and Rus in particular. These changes, which left their imprint on the agriculture of many European countries, occurred as late as the 16th century, and I have analysed them elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> Russian corn became increasingly important on world markets when feudal relations revealed signs of obvious decay, namely, in the late 18th and particularly in the 19th century, but I think even Rozhkov would not deny that furs undoubtedly remained one of the most profitable and important Russian commodities on European and Asian markets, although agriculture continued to be the chief occupation of Russia's rural population.

Apart from these particular opinions there are also those who, while not entirely rejecting the role played by agriculture in Ancient Rus, accept it with various reservations.

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<sup>1</sup> The Slavs and the Antes.

<sup>2</sup> Б. Д. Греков, Крестьяне на Руси с древнейших времен до XVII в., М. 1946. (B. D. Grekov, *Peasants in Rus from the Earliest Times to the 17th century*, Moscow, 1946.)



Thus, Oganovsky wrote in 1911 that "fragmentary facts and logical arguments give us the following picture of the evolution of production: from circa the 7th to 10th centuries, trapping and bee-keeping prevailed everywhere, with agriculture in incipient forms. Agriculture becomes a noteworthy feature of the economy in the South in the 10th century, and in the North in the 11th century. It assumed the leading role in the 11th and 12th centuries, outstripping all other industries.<sup>1</sup>

But our records give us nothing to support either the basic theses of Kluchevsky, Rozhkov and their followers, or the half-way position adopted by Oganovsky and others.

Agriculture became the main occupation of the Eastern, as well as of the other Slavs long before the formation of the Ancient Rus state. It continued to develop in Kiev Rus, assuming new forms with the growth of the productive forces.

The hunting of fur-bearing animals on a large scale was the result of foreign and domestic trade. It could become an important occupation only in the North, because the central regions (the South in particular) lacked fur-bearing animals able to compete in value with those of the North.

It was therefore not only the Slavs but also their ancestors who were above all farmers, and simultaneously skilled cattle-breeders, trappers, fowlers, and fishermen. Industrial skills helped the Slav to build his home. Feudal land tenure and peasant economies remained the basis of Rus life for several centuries.

## 2. AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUES IN ANCIENT RUS

Rus agricultural techniques, like Rus agriculture itself, derive from the cultures among which we have reason to seek the beginnings of the Russian people.

<sup>1</sup> Н. Огановский, Закономерность аграрной эволюции, ч. 2, Саратов 1911, стр. 33-34. (N. Oganovsky, *The Law of Agrarian Evolution*, Part 2, Saratov, 1911, pp. 33-34.)



In the work already mentioned, Passek describes techniques dating back to the 3rd and 2nd millennia B.C., relating to tillage, harvesting and the treating of cereals. Passek illustrates them by implements such as hoes made of deer horn, stone tips for hoes, a sickle made of bone, a stone quern and pottery for storing grain.

All this is of vital importance to the historian of Kiev Rus, because material production is the basis of social life, and the means of labour also indicate the social relations in which the work is performed. The history of society cannot be built up without a study of this aspect of the historical process.

These old tools are as vital to the study of extinct social and economic relations, as are pieces of bone to the study of extinct species.

When studying early Rus agricultural techniques the complexity and interdependence of the indivisible social and economic process should constantly be borne in mind. If we accept that agriculture predominated among our ancestors long before the formation of the state, we must remember that the study of agriculture and its techniques in perspective in fact becomes the study of the basis of social development in its entirety.

The task thus posed (and it can hardly be posed otherwise) becomes of great importance to the solution of the basic problems of historical development of Russian society, and above all of the peasantry.

Obviously, a mere posing of questions, however correctly, does not bring us nearer to the answer. The problem requires exhaustive study—something which it has so far not received.

Pokrovsky made the first attempt to link the evolution of Rus agricultural techniques with the various stages in the history of social relations, but his premises and conclusions, as we shall see, need substantial reconsideration.

In connecting agricultural techniques with social relations, Pokrovsky believed them to have passed through

three stages, namely, assartage, fallow and three-field farming, the latter gaining the upper hand in the 15th and 16th centuries, depending on the area (in Novgorod earlier than in the centre of the Russian state). Assartage and fallow farming, he thought, made the permanent settlement of the peasant impossible, while the three-field system demanded it. Pokrovsky suggests that this tied the peasant to the soil and to the landlord. The author is unquestionably right in linking agricultural techniques with social relations. But the rest of his theses, above all his sequence of agricultural systems, requires correction. His periodization of these stages is likewise highly dubious. Finally, it should be noted that the bondage of the peasants was not the automatic outcome of the state of agricultural techniques.

I have reason to believe that the author himself was not always a supporter of this clear-cut scheme as would at first appear. In view of the importance of the matter, I take the liberty of quoting some of the reasoning found in his other papers. In one of his larger works, Pokrovsky wrote: "It is true that the great-grandson of a Russian peasant often died far away from the grave of his great-grandfather, but it would be premature to suppose that both great-grandfather and great-grandson were itinerant farmers who viewed their *izba* as a sort of inn"; "Ancient Rus held the peasant to be a more or less stable and consistent inhabitant of his village. He who would roam had to leave in a hurry lest he be fused with the mass of local inhabitants, whom the law apparently regarded as sedentary and not nomadic. In short, the concept of the ancient Rus farmer as a transient tenant of the lord's land<sup>1</sup> and of quitrent as a form of rent must needs be greatly limited, and not only because it would be strange to discover a modern juridical category among relations so unlike ours, but also because this con-

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<sup>1</sup> The author has in mind Kluchevsky's opinion of the peasant as a "free and transient tenant of another's land, whose freedom was guaranteed by the right of departure and the right of agreement." (V. O. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part 2, Moscow, 1937, p. 321.)



cept is at variance with the facts. Evidently, it was not because he was a tenant that the peasant had to share his produce with the lord, but for some other reason.

"West-European literature has long since noted this aspect of feudalism as a world-wide phenomenon. The *feudalization* of landholdings has been discovered long since."<sup>1</sup>

The fact is, however, that in a later paper Pokrovsky asserts something entirely to the contrary: "As for the peasants, they could not be called serfs at that time. The peasants could not have been attached to the soil for 600 years for the sole reason that there were no stable serfage relations in the village at that time. As I have just pointed out, there was enough land for all. The tillers moved through vast forests, felled trees and cleared patches for their fields. When these patches were exhausted, the peasants moved on. In this manner the Rus population of that period was in a state of constant migration. A peasant's grandson rarely died where his grandfather was born and a peasant had several, even several dozen, fields during the course of his lifetime.

"This constant movement of the population made it unprofitable for the ruling class to attach it to a given place. The peasants were attached to the soil and to the landowners very much later, when land became scarce and crowded, and a regular agricultural system appeared—first the fallow and then the three-field system."

It is evident that one of these concepts must be discarded, since they are incompatible.

I believe the facts support Pokrovsky's initial concept of the sedentary peasant and disprove his theory of vagrancy.

The tribe with its chieftain was more or less firmly set-

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<sup>1</sup> М. Н. Покровский, *Русская история с древнейших времен*, т. I, М. 1933, стр. 43—44. (M. N. Pokrovsky, *Russian History from Earliest Times*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1933, pp. 43-44.) Certain corrections in his concept of the origin of serfdom in Russia were made by the author in a later paper entitled "Марксизм и особенности исторического развития России", стр. 84. (*Marxism and the Peculiarities of Russia's Historical Development*, p. 84.)

tled on the land. The tribal stronghold, similar to the Be-reznyiaki discovered by Tretyakov, was built for the express purpose of making sedentary life possible. The members of the rural community with their individual economies lived in settlements which were larger but un-fortified, but they too showed no desire to reject a settled way of life.

With the appearance of classes, when economically strong people seized power over the settled mass, from the moment when we are justified in regarding the peasantry as a class, nothing happened to turn the hitherto seden-tary tiller into a vagrant seeker of the means of subsist-ence. This, of course, did not exclude the possibility of some peasant who failed in his holding being forced to do odd jobs in distant places. But we are not concerned here with these exceptions, numerous though they may be, but with the bulk of the peasantry.

It was this mass of tillers who had long been settled on the land that, with the appearance of the ruling classes, became the object of extra-economic coercion. The settled peasant was systematically drawn into the feudal lord's power. The latter, very naturally, also did not miss the chance of subjecting those who had lost their means of subsistence and who were forced to work for him on any terms.

It is a matter of principle to decide how the large-scale feudal landholdings and their economy originated, and whether the feudal lord initially seized unoccupied land and then settled it with vagrants, or whether he merely took possession of populated and cultivated land. It will be remembered that the theory of age-old peasant vagrancy served to support another theory, according to which the peasant who became a serf had never owned land and had been a tenant from time immemorial. This theory held that the people roaming the vast expanses of Rus without any means of subsistence could obtain land and implements only from the landowner who settled them



on his land and thus helped to turn the nomadic bulk of the Russian people into sedentary Russian citizens for a period.

But there are two points in this theory which its adherents take on trust, namely, that the large privileged landowners possessed land which was initially unpopulated and later attracted tenants; and that the bulk of the Russian people roamed and did not firmly settle on the soil until the privileged landowner settled them on his *demesne*.

It can easily be shown that both these premises have absolutely no basis in fact.

Tretyakov's paper *Assartage in Eastern Europe* was the first attempt in this country to solve the problem of the development of agricultural techniques in relation to Russia. It should, I think, on the whole be considered successful. At least, his basic conclusions appear to be quite convincing. Assartage, as described by the records, is connected with a transition stage in the history of class society, namely, with the patriarchal community. The *sokha* and the harrow, the implements of a new stage in the history of agricultural production, appeared under the assartage system. Developing parallel to the general growth of the productive forces, they destroyed the assartage system and gave rise to a new form of agriculture. The major prerequisite for the evolution of the *sokha* was the appearance of draught animals.

Let us turn to original sources. Owing to the paucity of the sources on this subject, we shall naturally have to use not only direct evidence, but also hints, which nevertheless help to clarify the evolution of agricultural techniques.

First of all, it should be pointed out that assartage, as the prevailing system in certain parts of the Kiev area, is entirely out of the question, at least in the 9th and 11th centuries. It could have been retained longer in the north, around Novgorod, and in the north-east, in the Volga-Oka

basin. In the south, the forests were burnt and cut down at a rather early stage, and the further south the less forest there was, until at last the steppe came into its own. There can be no assartage in the steppe. The Scythians who for a long time engaged in agriculture on the banks of the Dnieper, did not burn down the forests to cultivate their fields. Otherwise, Herodotus would surely have mentioned it. Scythian tools confirm this. There was a legend among them that a golden plough, a yoke, a pole-axe and a bowl fell from the skies and this celestial gift taught the Scythians to plough. Assartage renders the plough superfluous.

The facts at our disposal (thus far purely archaeological) witness that the axe as a major implement of the assartage method gives way to the *sokha* even in the north as early as the 8th and 9th centuries. In the Kiev area this event should be dated to pre-Scythian times at least.

Excavations to study the history of agriculture in this country have been started quite recently. The data thus far collected has not been sufficiently studied. At the moment we are in a position to refer to certain facts suggesting a solution of the problem, but not so far providing the solution. The Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., in collaboration with Soviet agronomists, has been entrusted with the task of writing a history of agriculture in this country from the earliest times to our day.

The part of Europe occupied by the Eastern Slavs should obviously be divided into zones according to climate, soil and vegetation, and each examined separately. It would then be necessary to establish the connection between the system of land usage, the quality of the implements of production, and the social and economic state of society. It should be borne in mind that every new division of labour leads to the creation of special tools and that the means of labour constitute the distinctive features of every stage of social production.



For our purposes, the territory occupied by the Eastern Slavs should be divided according to the existence or non-existence of forests. The wooded North and a large part of the central regions naturally merge into one zone which differs from the other, the southern zone, where there is either less forest or none at all.

At a certain period of social development the North appears as a land of assartage, while the absence of forests in the South allows the introduction of fallow farming at the earliest stages of agricultural development.

It would be superfluous to describe in detail the assartage system as a whole. But I believe it necessary to touch upon its economic basis. It requires the expenditure of much labour (about 45 man- and woman-days per *desyatina*<sup>1</sup> and the participation of large groups of people, who must jointly hold a piece of land at least 10-15 times larger than the annual sown area. Plots can be used for only three or four years. This system does not require draught animals.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that the ordinary peasant family could not cope with assartage as the main system of economy. Resort to fallow farming under the assartage system is no system at all. The land lying fallow is covered with an undergrowth and again requires the firing of trees, although with less effort. Hence, fallow farming in wooded country is not a separate stage in the development of agricultural systems, but an integral element of assartage. Genuine fallow farming is to be met with only in the steppe.

Unfortunately, there are no specialized studies on this subject. But I think the fallow-farming system can be understood, at least in its main features, if we study it among modern steppe peoples, particularly the 19th-century Kazakhs. It is described in the report on Kazakh land

<sup>1</sup> *Desyatina*—a Russian measure of land equivalent to 2.7 acres.  
—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> P. N. Tretyakov, *Assartage in Eastern Europe*. *Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, Vol. 14, Issue 1, 1932, pp. 9-10.

usage by an expedition to the steppes of the Turgai region. It is quite obvious that we have no right mechanically to apply these observations to the Black Sea coastal steppe, but we are sure to discover a few facts which should be of use in solving our particular problem.

The vast expanses of the land and its fertility allowed the Kazakh tiller to do without complex techniques. A single tillage of the steppe often ensured a harvest for many consecutive years. After the virgin soil is upturned and sown, the tiller ploughs up the soil next year only if he does not expect to take in a reasonably good harvest; otherwise the seeds are merely harrowed under and the soil remains untouched either by plough or *sokha*. In this manner, corn is sown on one and the same plot year in year out until it is entirely overgrown with weeds.

Abandoned fallow land is upturned at the first opportunity if there is any hope of taking in a harvest, since fallow land is generally easier to plough up than virgin soil. This goes on until the soil ceases to yield good harvests. Five varieties of cereals are usually gathered in succession: 1) millet or wheat; 2) wheat; 3) wheat; 4) oats; 5) oats.

The fields were cultivated with the aid of the *sabans* (purchased collectively from *zemstvo* storehouses) ordinarily used by Kazakhs and local Russian peasants. The *sabans* and harrows were bought in Kustanai, Troitsk, Orsk, and other surrounding settlements by artels of 2, 3, or, more rarely, 5 tillers who would club together for the purpose. On the average there would be half a *sokha* and half a harrow per sowing household in the district. The Kazakhs of the Fourth Administrative *aul*, Kumak *volost*, remember the time when 10 tillers would club together to buy a *saban*; at the time of the investigation every prosperous tiller tried to have his own *saban*. But the majority continued to till on a *supryaga*, or club basis. Two or three tillers would buy a *saban* and till the land collectively: one would handle the *sokha*, another would



sow, while a third would drive the animals. He who contributed more oxen or horses was entitled to plough up a bigger plot for himself. Generally, every one sowed his own plot of land because "the harvest depends on good fortune." If a tiller, joining the artel, had no animals, but had a *saban*, he received one-fifth of the field ploughed up with his implement.

Only those who had no less than two oxen could become members of a *supryaga*. If one had a single ox it was more gainful to let it out for the spring ploughing in return for half a *desyatina* of millet or wheat.

The majority of Kazakh tillers (61.2 per cent) cultivated their fields in a *supryaga*, 22.7 per cent ploughed independently, 10.9 per cent had hired hands, and 5.2 per cent tilled on a mixed basis. This last category also included those who hired Kazakhs or Russians to plough with their own implements but with the employer's draught animals. This last group also included those who tilled part of their field themselves or in a *supryaga*, and the rest on the Russian *ispolu*<sup>1</sup> basis.

Thus, only the last two categories of tillers, or 16.1 per cent, resorted to hired labour, while the rest, or 83.9 per cent, tilled their fields themselves or in an artel.<sup>2</sup>

Observations of the actual life of the Kazakhs and their system of agriculture lead to the following conclusions: 1) assartage was impossible there; 2) fallow farming was the only system possible on vast expanses of free land and under conditions of migration with herds. Without the latter the system of agriculture must needs change and be transformed into a two- or three-field system.

To sum up, the wooded North passes from assartage to

<sup>1</sup> *Ispolu*—half and half.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> "Материалы по киргизскому землепользованию, собранные и разработанные экспедицией по исследованию степных областей, Тургайская область, Кустанайский уезд", т. V, Воронеж 1903, стр. 124—127, 131. (*Data on Kirghiz Land Usage, Collected and Classified by an Expedition into the Steppes of the Turgai Region, Kustanai Volost*, Vol. V, Voronezh, 1903, pp. 124-27, 131.)

field tillage, while the steppe starts out with genuine fallow farming and goes on to the same field tillage system.

In both cases the implements of production differ and their history is dissimilar.

The three-pronged *sokha* appears in the North. It is designed to loosen and furrow the formerly wooded field on which the trees had been burnt down. Later, the number of prongs is reduced and the share makes its appearance. This implement should be seen in connection with a new system of agriculture, the two- or three-field system, which requires manuring and implements with mould-boards.

In the South, the ploughing implement has a history of its own: the hoe—the *rало*—the plough. It is hard to say anything definite about the draught animals yoked to the *rало*. It is very possible that these were oxen, but the horse is not entirely excluded. The northern *sokha* “prefers” the horse. It may well be that the difference in the *rало* systems is itself linked with the choice of draught animals. In any case, the *rало*-plough originated in circumstances which differed from those of the *sokha*.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, the conditions of assartage did not correspond to the new implements of production, much the same as the tribal system did not fit into the new social structure. This new social structure was based on small-scale farming of the peasant type, and could have arisen only when small-scale individual land cultivation was predominant, where the implements of production and tillage techniques were in full accord with the draught force of the domesticated animal.

The implements of land cultivation evolve in a similar manner.

We are not concerned with the Dnieper area, since agricultural techniques there derive from Scythian and even pre-Scythian times. As for the North-West and North-East, the first iron points for the wooden plough were discovered

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<sup>1</sup> The history of agricultural implements is in its incipient stage.



in the Volga-Kama region dating to the formation of the Bulgar cities, and in the Old Ladoga excavations of 8th-century strata. They have also been found in the surrounding areas. All are iron points for two-pronged *sokhas*, although parts of ploughs have also been discovered in the Bulgars. The excavations carried out by Lyavdansky and his associates of several dozen strongholds along the upper reaches of the Dnieper failed to produce a single *sokha* iron point. Only scythes, sickles and hoes were discovered, although Lyavdansky himself continued to hope that *sokha* iron points would be found.<sup>1</sup>

Further excavations will undoubtedly reveal more abundant and conclusive data. But we are already in a position to state that in approximately the 8th and 9th centuries cultivation with the aid of the iron-pointed *sokha* was already in progress in the wooded areas watered by the Dnieper and its tributaries, and by the Lovat, as well as in the Volkhov basin. It is not yet possible to determine when it originated there.

This more progressive method of cultivation did not entirely supersede assartage, which continued to be used in wooded areas for some time, though only as a survival. The future lay with the *sokha* and the plough.

Agricultural techniques developed considerably and this paved the way for drastic changes in land tenure, i.e., for an eventual drastic reorganization of social relations.

Let us see what our written sources have to say on this subject.

A close perusal of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* shows that it presents a picture of a well-organized princely demesne with stable fields. The *Extensive Pravda* mentions the implements not of assartage but of plough farming, namely, the plough and the harrow (Article 57), which we have no reason to regard as novelties in the 12th century.

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<sup>1</sup> N. A. Lyavdansky, *A Few Facts about the Strongholds of Smolensk Province*, *Izvestia Smolenskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. III, Issue 3, p. 247.

The administration of the estate likewise indicates that not assartage but real field tillage was practised.

In some versions of the *Extensive Pravda* there is an article which reads: "Here are the oath dues: on a charge of murder—30 *kunas*, 30 *kunas* less three in case of a litigation involving lands with beehives, as much in litigation involving *roleinaya* land, and nine *kunas* in a suit involving liberation." (Art. 109 of the First Troitsk Copy.) The *roleinaya* land which is the subject of litigation settled in court by means of an oath, is obviously field land.

Notice the caution exercised by the population with regard to the prince's *polye*. The monks of the Kiev Pechera Monastery together with their parishioners are in the act of selecting a site for the construction of a stone church. A considerable crowd of people has gathered around the prince's *polye* near by without daring to choose it, although it was most suitable. Prince Svyatoslav, who happened to be passing by, inquired what the crowd was about. Having discovered the cause of the meeting, he made a gift of his *polye* to the monastery. This was quite unexpected, it appears, for the crowd, because the author of the story (*Life of Feodosy of Pechera*) says that the prince did so because he was "moved by God."

In our ancient written sources the term *polye* has several meanings—field, ploughland, meadow, a piece of vacant land in general, the steppe, etc. It is difficult to say precisely in what sense it is used in the above text. The plot of land in question lay on the outskirts of Kiev, had definite boundaries and was of considerable value (otherwise the monks would not have regarded it with such circumspection). In any case, no one could use this field without the prince's permission. If it was not under cultivation at the time, which is indicated by several details in the story, it was nevertheless viewed as a plot suitable for tillage or for some other economic purpose.

We find references to real field land not only in *Russkaya Pravda*, but also in some of the deeds. Thus in the deed



of donation granted by Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich to the Panteleimon Monastery in Novgorod the existence of field land is quite obvious. Its boundaries are defined as follows: "The boundaries of that land are from Yuriev *oranitsa* up the straight path, and from the path near Ushkov *oranitsa* on its upper edge. . . . From the Yuriev boundary along the gully near Yuriev flood land, then near Yuriev *oranitsa* along the gully to its end, between Yuriev *oranitsa* and Ushkov *polye*, again up the straight path."<sup>1</sup>

Ushkov *polye* is, apparently, the same as Ushkov *oranitsa*; *oranitsa* is nothing more than a systematically ploughed field. It is impossible to plot a boundary line by indicating signs which are not topographically stable and precise.

Great pains are taken to plot and describe the boundaries of landholdings in general in the documents of that period. "And the boundary of that land lies from the Volkhov River up the Vitka stream to the common path, and up the path up to the cross, and from the cross to the cow lane, and up the cow lane to the alder-tree, and from the alder to the young fir-tree, and from the young fir-tree up to the Donets, and then down the Donets to where the Donets flows into the Derevyanitsa, and the Derevyanitsa flows into the Volkhov. And that is the boundary of this land."<sup>2</sup>

While this deed may have been re-edited (some go so far as to say that it was forged),<sup>3</sup> the same cannot be said

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<sup>1</sup> Грамоты Великого Новгорода и Пскова" под ред. С. Н. Валка М.—Л. 1949, № 82, стр. 141. (*The Deeds of Great Novgorod and Pskov* ed. by S. N. Valk, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, No. 82, p. 141.)

<sup>2</sup> *The Deeds of Great Novgorod and Pskov*, No. 102, p. 159. *Purchase Deed of Antony the Roman* (not later than 1147).

<sup>3</sup> С. Н. Валк, Начальная история древнерусского частного акта ("Вспомогательные исторические дисциплины", сб. статей М.—Л. 1937, стр. 285—318). (S. N. Valk, *Initial History of the Ancient Rus Private Deed. Supplementary Historical Subjects*, collection, Moscow-Leningrad, 1937, pp. 285-318.) Objections to Valk's doubts regarding the authenticity of the deed are raised in M. N. Tikhomirov's О частных актах в древней Руси ("Исторические записки", т. XVII, стр. 235—241). (*Private Deeds in Ancient Rus. Istoricheskie Zapiski*, Vol. 17, pp. 235-41.)

of its contemporary, the deed of Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich, in which we find an equally detailed description of the boundaries of a piece of land donated to a monastery.<sup>1</sup> The deed of Prince Mstislav and his son Vsevolod, dated somewhat earlier, has similar accounts.<sup>2</sup>

Without analysing the arguments regarding the authenticity of the deed granted to Yuriev Monastery, I should like to note that the elements of interest here are also contained in the forged deed. I am not interested in either the fact of the donation itself, or the accuracy of the boundaries, but the detailed nature of their description, which is a clear indication of the attitude of early 12th-century people to land as being something of very definite value. I do not doubt for a moment that that is how things also stood in the 11th and the 10th centuries, and even earlier. The land of the prince's estates of the 10th century, mentioned in the chronicles, must have also had definite boundaries.

The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* refers very clearly to the boundaries between field land: "And he who ploughs up a boundary or destroys a boundary mark shall be fined 12 *grivnas*." (Art. 34.) In the *Extensive Pravda* this article is interpreted even more clearly: "He who cuts down the boundary of an apiary or ploughs up the boundary of a field, or removes the fence of a homestead boundary, shall be fined 12 *grivnas*." (Art. 72.) Here we have various forms of private property separated by boundaries, namely, a patch of forest used as an apiarium, a piece of field land, and a plot of homestead land.

The terminology relating to the various offences is extremely interesting. The boundary of the apiarium can be "cut down," that of the field land can be "ploughed up," and the homestead plot boundary can be "removed." I shall not dwell on the significance of these terms. I wish to stress once again that a most important document dat-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Deeds of Great Novgorod and Pskov*, No. 82, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 81, p. 140.



ing back to the mid-11th century and reflecting the social relations of that period very precisely and definitely specifies the existence of field land owned by individuals and separated by boundaries, the infringement of which entails the payment of heavy fines, second only to those exacted for murder. These examples of donative and purchase deeds are amply supported in the generalizations of the *Russkaya Pravda*. It is clear that plots with stable boundaries and connected with homesteads could hardly be patches of forest land cleared for cultivation.

The term *orati* in the documents cited above did not mean a superficial loosening of the soil after the trees had been burned down. We have a precise explanation of this term in the *Laurenty Annals*. An ancient Rus preacher, desirous of glorifying Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich, depicts the process of cultivation in this manner: "Even as one ploughs up the land, another sows the seed, while others reap and eat sufficient food, so is it with him: his father Vladimir ploughed up the soil and made it soft (i.e., ploughed and harrowed it—*Author*), i.e., enlightened it with baptism, he sowed the hearts of the faithful with the words of the book, while we reap, accepting the teaching of the book."<sup>1</sup> Not a word about the burning down of trees. And nothing like what we find in *Kalevala*. Veinemeinen's preparations for his agricultural pursuits are depicted thus:

*He plants the pines on the mountains,  
He plants the firs on the hills ...  
He plants the birches in the gullies...  
The trees grow to a great height...*

Then, when

*He saw the height of the trees,  
The spritely growth of their shoots...  
Veinemeinen, old and true,  
Then made a sharp axe,*

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 1037; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 102.

*He began to cut down the forests,  
He threw them down on the field,  
He cut up all the trees...*

*And an eagle brought him fire,  
He struck a flame with a blow.  
A wind came from the north,  
And another comes from the east;  
The woods are turned to ash...*

Only then

*He goes forth to sow,  
He goes to scatter the seed...*

As a result, Veinemeinen's labours

*Brought forth the high stalks  
From the soft soil,  
And the ears appeared dark...<sup>1</sup>*

A comparison with the Russian *bylinas* in this respect is highly instructive: we do not find assartage here. Mikula Selyaninovich tills the soil with a *sokha*.

*The ploughman ploughs the field and whistles,  
The sokha crunches,  
The shares grate against the stones.*

*He makes furrows,  
He roots out the stubs and the grubs  
And he throws the boulders into the furrows,  
The ploughman's mare is light bay,  
Her tugs are made of silk,  
His sokha is made of maple,  
The shares are made of steel,  
The mould-board is made of silver,  
The handles are made of pure gold.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> „Калевала“, М.—Л. 1933, стр. 8—12. (*Kalevala*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1933, pp. 8-12.)

<sup>2</sup> „Памятники мировой литературы. Русская устная словесность“, т. II, М. 1919, стр. 8. (*Memorials of World Literature. Russian Oral Poetry*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1919, p. 8.)



A student of this *bylina* writes of the period of its compilation: "Judging by the circumstances in which the prince and the ploughman meet, Mikula's personality and the legend itself should be regarded as being of a rather early origin: it is a period in the ancient Rus system when the *polyudye*<sup>1</sup> still existed" of which much is said in the *bylina*. The scene of the *bylina* should likewise be emphasized. It is a typically northern, apparently Novgorod, landscape, with its soil full of boulders.

After his miraculous cure Ilya Muromets lived in his home village of Karacharovo and helped his parents in their work as peasants. Some versions of this *bylina* state that Ilya helped them to dig up tree roots to clear a field. But there is yet another version which indicates assartage.

But this version, which mentions the *pal*,<sup>2</sup> can be interpreted differently. Sokolov believes it to be of later origin (17th-18th century) containing northern features of later origin. The *pal* as a survival of the primitive method of agriculture, was to be found in the north even in the early 20th century.

*Ilya went to his father,  
To help him in his peasant work.  
The pal had to be cleared of dubye-kolodye:  
He chopped out all the dubye-kolodye.*<sup>3</sup>

Hence, memories of assartage were, undoubtedly, alive in some regions of Eastern Europe in the 10th century, and assartage itself was still practised, a contention supported by our archaeological materials. But it is still highly characteristic that Mikula Selyaninovich in the Volkh-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5. (*Polyudye*—the collection of taxes from household to household.—*Tr.*)

<sup>2</sup> *Pal* (*pal*—a derivative of *paliti*—to burn, fire.—*Tr.*) is a patch of forest where the trees have been burnt down to allow sowing. *Dubye-kolodye* are the tree roots which had not burnt, and had to be dug out.

<sup>3</sup> "Былины", изд. т-ва "Огни", СПб 1911, стр. 27. (*Bylinas*, published by Ognī, St. Petersburg, 1911, p. 27.)

ov area is engaged in actual ploughing, without any traces of digging up roots.<sup>1</sup>

In any case, the *bylina* epos in its entirety speaks of a country where plough farming was the main occupation of the population.

Nor is there any mention of assartage in the *Sermon of Kirill of Turov* (12th century). Here is his description, undoubtedly true to life, of the act of ploughing: "Today, the plougher of the word, leading the wordy oxen to the spiritual yoke, and sinking the *ralo*-cross into the furrows of the mind, and drawing the furrow of repentance, sows the spiritual seed therein and rejoices at the hope of future blessings."<sup>2</sup> This is also a complete refutation of assartage. Neither do we see it in the well-known description of the battle in the *Lay of Igor's Host*, where the imagery is drawn from agricultural practice. In a laudation of Prince Vladimir, a line is deliberately drawn between two phases of cultivation, namely, the ploughing and the harrowing, two stages in the preparation of the soil for sowing which are characteristic features of plough farming, not of assartage. It would, therefore, be proper to treat the terms *polye* and *oranitsa* mentioned above as applying to plough farming and not to assartage.

The *smerd* mentioned in Vladimir Monomakh's famous speech owns a small individual plot of land, which he tills with the aid of his own horse.

"I am surprised, comrades, when people pity the horse with which they plough; and why do you not understand that when the *smerd* begins to plough..." "Now is not

<sup>1</sup> Tretyakov has logically arrived at the conclusion that the new system of life (new types of settlements, plough farming) first originated in the north, among the Novgorodites and the Krivichy, while further south, particularly on the Oka and in the area between the Dnieper and the Desna, ancient forms of life continued until the 8th and 9th centuries. (See his *Eastern Slavonic Tribes on the Eve of the Formation of the Kiev State. Izvestia Akademii Nauk SSSR. Hist. & Phil. series, Vol. II, No. 3, 1945, p. 165.*)

<sup>2</sup> "Рукописи А. С. Уварова", т. II, СПб 1858, стр. 21. (*A. S. Uvarov's Manuscripts, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1858, p. 21.*)



the time to divorce the *smerd* from his field. . . . He wishes to destroy the *smerds* and their fields. . . . If that *smerd* begins to plough with his horse in spring. . . ." Nor is this assartage.

Various kinds of land used in the economy are mentioned in the depositive deed of Varlaam of Khutynsk dating back to the late 12th century. "Varlaam deposited with the Church of the Holy Saviour *zemlya* and a vegetable garden, and fisheries, and golden-eye fowling places, and meadows. . . . And in the other village of Svuditsi he donated to the Holy Saviour *nivas* and meadows and fishing and fowling grounds with whatsoever is in them. . . ."<sup>1</sup> It appears that both villages had similar economic techniques, but we note a difference in terminology in the enumeration of the details: the *niva* of the second village is the *zemlya* of the first, but both obviously denote regularly cultivated fields.

In one of his sermons, Serapion, the Bishop of Vladimir, describing the horrors of the Tatar invasion and the ensuing devastation, remarks that "our villages are overgrown with *lyadina*." It must be assumed, therefore, that prior to the Tatars there were cultivated fields there. The *lyadina* is a calamity, a result of the Tatar devastation, and not an ordinary feature of the assartage system of agriculture.

We find a similar picture at an earlier date, in 1093, after a war, when "the fields are overgrown, and the dwellings haunted by beasts."

There is no discrepancy between our written records and the earlier material evidence on this subject. It may be safely asserted that plough farming predominated from the 8th and 9th centuries even in the northern part of Rus and very much earlier in the middle and southern areas around the Dnieper. This does not mean, of course, that

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<sup>1</sup> This deed has also raised doubts as to its authenticity which is maintained by M. N. Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 226-33.

the earlier archaic forms of agriculture had disappeared entirely. Survivals of these are to be met with in various places in the 16th and 17th centuries, and even as late as the 20th century. But agricultural development took the new road prepared for it by the *sokha* and the plough, which varied according to the conditions in the northern and southern regions.



IV. THE SOCIAL SYSTEM AMONG  
THE EASTERN SLAVS PRIOR  
TO THE  
FORMATION  
OF ANCIENT RUS





## 1. THE ANCIENT RUS *OBSHCHINA*<sup>1</sup>

Agriculture was the main occupation of our ancestors. It had passed through a number of stages in its development prior to the formation of the early feudal Rus state, and by the time the Russian people were organized into a state it had attained a fairly high level over the greater part of its territory. Field land was ploughed by an implement which loosened the soil with the aid of draught animals. Such are the main conclusions from the preceding chapters.

It was also noted that the evolution of the means of labour and of production techniques is linked with changes in social relations, and that the Eastern Slavs had passed through a period of collective economy, in short, that they had passed from the tribal system to the rural *obshchina* system prior to the formation of the Ancient Rus state.

We are now faced with the task of studying the life of the rural *obshchina*, an organization of the farming population whom, from a certain date, we are justified in describing as peasants.

The study (as far as our sources will allow, of course) of the evolution of the peasant *obshchina* will give us some idea of the status of the majority of the rural population within its independent state, as well as in the period when the nascent feudal nobility was growing in strength.

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<sup>1</sup> *Obshchina*—a derivative of "*obshch*"—common.—*Tr.*

We shall be able to answer the question which aroused such heated controversy on the eve of the liberation of the serfs and even later—the question of the peasant's relations to the soil: was the peasant ever a landowner, or was he settled on the landlord's soil from time immemorial?

The problem of the social system of the Slavs, the Eastern Slavs and Ancient Rus in particular, is very old. Much has been said and written on the subject. If we leave aside the casual remarks of the 18th- and early 19th-century scholars—"casual" in the sense that the authors themselves attached no special importance to them in their "theories" (there were no theories in the full sense of the word)—we shall have to start with Evers,<sup>1</sup> who worked out a theory of the tribal system, as well as Solovyov, and Kavelin.

Evers rightly pointed out that our sources use the word "tribe" as an obscure term which includes the concept of the family as we know it. He also quite rightly pointed out that the state supersedes the tribal system. But his assertion that the state is a mere union of tribes is completely unacceptable. Evers is concerned most of all with the transition from tribal relations to the state.

Solovyov interpreted the tribe in a sense different from ours, but he was right in noting the arbitrary use of this term by the chronicler.

Nevertheless, in spite of the obvious advantages of the "tribal school" over its predecessors, it failed to cope with its task, like the subsequent generations of historians.

K. S. Aksakov made the trenchant remark that the "tribal school" failed to define the essence of the tribe. "Many articles and papers have been written on the subject," wrote Aksakov, "but it must be admitted that neither of these new scholars (meaning Solovyov and Kavelin—

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<sup>1</sup> И. Ф. Г. Эверс, Древнейшее русское право в историческом его раскрытии, СПб 1835. (I. F. Evers, *A Historical Analysis of the Earliest Rus Law*, St. Petersburg, 1835.)



Author) have as yet managed to give a clear-cut definition of what tribal life is. They are content to use it in the sense accepted in general conversation: they use the word 'patriarchal' instead of 'tribal,' without defining the former, assuming that it also is understood."<sup>1</sup>

The reasoning of this opponent of Solovyov and Kavelin appears at first glance to be much clearer: "There was in Ancient Rus a (non-tribal) social, namely, *obshchina* system, a life based on the *obshchina*.... The Russian land has been the least patriarchal and the most social (namely *obshchina*) country from time immemorial."

But if we probe Aksakov's categorical statements regarding the *obshchina*, which, in the final analysis, proves to be a "moral union of men," it becomes clear that he with his concept of the "*obshchina*" has failed just as miserably as Solovyov and Kavelin with their concept of "tribe," with the sole difference, however, that the latter, in spite of their mistakes, had a structural perspective. Their concept of the tribe as a primitive form of community with inherent elements of decay led to a dialectical (in the Hegelian sense) explanation of the subsequent form of that community, a natural (in the idealist sense) succession of these forms, while the *obshchina* of Aksakov and his followers, existing from time immemorial, is simultaneously the ideal and the basis for the future. The *obshchina*, Aksakov believed, is a "popular principle which permeates the whole of Russia's history." That is why it serves as a basis for the interpretation of Russia's history and is in no sense a "succession of historical phenomena and forms," as the adherents of the tribal theory held. It becomes clear why Solovyov regarded Aksakov's course as entirely anti-historical.

The controversy around the Russian *obshchina*, which flared up in the mid-19th century, was not merely an academic clash of ideas. Both sides laid special stress on the

<sup>1</sup> К. С. Аксаков, Полное собрание сочинений, т. I, М. 1889, стр. 65. (K. S. Aksakov, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1889, p. 65.)



conclusions. Those who held the *obshchina* to be immutable and to have existed from time immemorial regarded it as a guarantee against the incursion of capitalism into the Russian village and the appearance of the proletariat, which they held responsible for the revolutions in Europe and the "ulcers of capitalism." The *obshchina*, they believed, protected Russia from capitalism and its consequences. Aksakov's opponents, who supported the evolutionary point of view, regarded the tribe as one of the rungs in the social scale, emphasizing that Russia's way forward would be essentially similar to that of the West, and lead naturally to the emergence of a bourgeois state.

Leontovich, the author of the ancient Slav *zadruga* theory, joined the discussion. In an effort to renovate the Slavophile<sup>1</sup> theory, he drew upon new data from the history of the Southern and Western Slavs<sup>2</sup> and attempted eclectically to merge Solovyov's schemes with the concepts of the Slavophiles, who insisted on a distinct historical development for the Slavs. He acknowledged the merits of his predecessors, including Solovyov. "Solovyov," he wrote, "did in fact discover the primary cell from which the body politic of the Russian people sprang and matured in prehistoric times.... In this respect Solovyov's theory appears to be a logically based scientific system." But he criticizes Solovyov's "school" for "failing to perceive that the tribal cell had completed its cycle, and had become another cell, with a more complex struc-

<sup>1</sup> The Slavophiles represented a trend in Russian social thinking in the mid-19th century. They believed that Russia had a special destiny without parallel in the West. They said this was due to the community system peculiar only to the Slavs, as well as to the Orthodox religion and the "harmony" that existed between tsar and people. The Slavophiles opposed revolution.

<sup>2</sup> Ф. И. Леонтович, О значении верви по Русской Правде и Полицикому статуту, сравнительно с задругою юго-западных славян, ЖМНП (Журнал министерства народного просвещения), 1867, апрель. (F. I. Leontovich, *The Meaning of Verva as Used by the "Russkaya Pravda" and the "Politsa Statute" in Comparison with the Zadruga of the South-Western Slavs. The Journal of the Ministry of Education, 1867, April.*)

ture, in the dark period of prehistoric times. Only the faintest traces and petrified relics of the old tribal system, divested of all organic ties with the life of the people, were retained at the dawn of history."

The Solovyov "school," Leontovich declares, confuses the new historical form of life with such prehistoric fossils. It does not see the gulf between them, which no amount of effort by the supporters of the tribal system theory can bridge.

Having exposed the weaknesses of the tribal theory, Leontovich nevertheless failed to solve the problem and only confused it further. The contradictions of his interpretations are glaring. He accepts the existence of tribal relations among the Rus but believes that the tribal system predominated only among the nomads, who led a warlike way of life and roamed about in fighting groups and large hordes whereas the Slav was historically a ploughman who had for a long time led a settled existence. According to Leontovich, the Slavs appear on the historic scene with the social forms with which they later enter the period of transition to the state.<sup>1</sup> The author believes that the main social unit at that time was the *zadruga*. This, he says, was a family *obshchina* which tended to grow over into the rural *obshchina*.

On the other hand, Leontovich does not discard Solovyov's assumption that the princely "House of the Ryurikovichy" was a "*zadruga* common to the entire people, to all the *volosts*." We later learn from Leontovich that the "House of the Ryurikovichy" was scattered over a vast territory, and that its princely members were in constant movement with the aim of "settling" the people by organizing *obshchinas* and *volosts*.

Actually, the princes did not move from place to place

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<sup>1</sup> Ф. И. Леонтович, Задружно-общинный характер политического быта древней России (ЖМНП, 1874, июль, стр. 138 и сл.). (F. I. Leontovich, *The Zadruga and Obshchina Nature of Political Life in Ancient Rus. The Journal of the Ministry of Education*, 1874, July, p. 138 et seq.)



as often as the author imagines. This was a short-lived phenomenon during the initial period of the dismemberment of the Ancient Rus state and the formation of independent feudal principalities.

On the other hand, it can safely be said that it was not the princes who organized the *obshchinas* and the *volosts*. They did not have to worry about "settling" the people because the latter had had their roots deep in the soil which they held to be their own, long before the appearance of the princes.

The author's terminology is clearly inconsistent and refutes his own interpretations.

I do not intend to survey the whole of preceding Russian historiography. I merely wish to point out a new stage in the history of this problem. In the 80's the controversy flared up anew, but on a different plane. A struggle against the growing socialist movement was in progress, and the supporters of the principles of bourgeois society came out in defence of the principle that land had been privately owned since time immemorial. Attempts were made to deny the existence of the *obshchina* in the past. In the West, this movement was headed by Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges while Sergeyevich was its most prominent representative in Russia. In his opinion, the period when interest in the ancient *obshchina* among the Germans, the Slavs and other peoples was revived, was "the time of a deep-seated belief in the ancient nature of the land *obshchina*."<sup>1</sup> He sets himself the task of struggling

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<sup>1</sup> В. И. Сергеевич, Русские юридические древности, т. III, стр. 412. (V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. III, p. 412.) In 1884, Engelman came out in similar vein against the Slavophiles and their *obshchina* theory. Replying to I. D. Belyayev, he wrote: "Like all the Slavophiles, he (Belyayev) lacked a critical sense and was unshakably convinced in the surpassing perfection of all the customs and institutions of Ancient Rus. Together with his old friends, the veteran Slavophiles Aksakov, Khomyakov, etc., Belyayev is a decided partisan of the fantastic hypothesis of the existence of an ancient Rus landholding *obshchina* from time immemorial—something of which there is not the slightest indication in the sources." (И. Энгель-



against this "prejudice." He flatly declares that land was privately owned from time immemorial, and that there are no traces whatsoever of collective landownership in Russian history. He believes his obviously contrived conclusions to be a triumph of historical truth.

Sergeyevich was not aware that his work was paralleled by other investigations—those of Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881) and Maxim Kovalevsky (1851-1916).

In his *Ancient Society*, on the basis of exhaustive studies of the life of the Indian tribes of America, Morgan succeeded in shedding light on the most obscure sections of history and explaining the basic features of primitive social organization which preceded the appearance of the state.

Kovalevsky who worked in the same direction, but on the basis of a study of the life of the mountain peoples of the Caucasus, made a substantial contribution to the solution of this problem.

But it remained for the Marxist classics to give the scientific solution. Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* is the key to the solution of problems which had been obscure or deliberately confused.

Today, we can set out the stages in the development of primitive society as follows:

1. The tribe is the basis of the social system among all primitive peoples.

2. At the summit of the development of the tribal system, namely, during the patriarchate, the family *obshchina* appears to be an organization of a number of freemen and bondmen under the patriarchal authority of the head of the *obshchina* (*familia*). It embraces several generations of the descendants of a single father together with their wives. They all live in one household, cultivate their

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ман, История крепостного права в России, М. 1900, стр. 22, примечание.) (I. Engelman, *A History of Serfdom in Russia*, Moscow 1900, p. 22, Note.)

fields in common, and subsist on common stores. The elective head of the *obshchina* is aided by a council consisting of all the adult members, women as well as men.

3. The disintegration of tribal relations leads to the appearance of the rural *obshchina* as a transition stage from the tribal system to the political. Nevertheless, the patriarchal family *obshchina*, or the large family, for a long time continues to be a living unit within the rural *obshchina* without contradicting it.

4. The family and the rural *obshchinas* are not immutable. The rural *obshchina* is influenced not only by its own internal processes but also by the state. It undergoes change in adapting itself to the demands of the state.

5. Tribal society did not outlive the tribal union, which signifies the beginning of its end. The territorial division which replaces the tribal, coupled with property inequality instead of equality, are the premises for the appearance of the state.

Such are the fundamental principles evolved by contemporary science.

With these broad generalizations in view, and on the basis of documentary evidence I should like to point out the trends in the development of the Russian *obshchina*.

When in the 11th century the urge arose in Rus to look back into the past, her society had travelled so far from the tribal system that it was difficult to reconstruct it. In the 11th century the tribal system could unquestionably be studied among the peoples of the Far North or elsewhere in this country where there were tribes at that stage of development. It was impossible to understand these tribal relations without a close study of the peoples among whom such relations prevailed, solely on the basis of such relics as were at the disposal of the author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. When the first written documents appeared they recorded this remote past in the form of survivals. It is not surprising, therefore, that the chron-



icler, always so factual in his detailed descriptions, is decidedly at a loss when he tackles the tribal system.

The East Slavonic tribe is first mentioned in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* in its undated part. It presented insurmountable obstacles to the author because he lacked precise information on the period. He speaks very obscurely even of the Polyane, of whom he knew rather more: "The Polyane lived separately and had their own tribes... and everyone lived in his own tribe and in his own place, each having a tribe of his own." Shakhmatov rightly believes that this is a merger of two different texts, and that the initial text of the *Chronicle* read: "The Polyane lived in tribes in their own places, each having a tribe of his own."

This is an indication that the chronicler knew something of the remote past of the Slavs, and tells us of their earliest social relations, which he describes as tribal. Further on he reiterates: "The Polyane, however, lived separately, as I have said."<sup>1</sup>

The term "tribe" in this case is undoubtedly a form of ancient social relations, although its content is not revealed in the chronicle. Still, we can guess what is meant by the term "tribe." The matriarchal tribe is obviously out of the question. The chronicler says nothing of the matriarchate in relation to the peoples of our country although in general he is aware of the different family and marriage forms underlying the various stages of the development of tribal relations. Thus, he writes of group marriage among the Chaldeans, in "Guilliom" and "Bretania" ("many men sleep with a single woman and many women fornicate with a single man").

The chronicler possibly errs in ascribing these forms of marriage to definite peoples, but he reveals a good knowledge of them, and it is clear that if he had the slightest hint of group marriage or the punalual family among the

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1910, pp. 8, 11; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 12, 14.

Slavs, the Finns or the Turki he would not have omitted to mention it. As it is, he describes the most backward Slav tribes (the Drevlyane, Radimichy, Vyatichy and the Severyane, whom he is not at all inclined to spare in his descriptions and whom he is ready to accuse of anything) as having the polygamous patriarchal family, and, possibly, conjugate marriage. "They had no marriage," he writes, "but games between the villages: they gathered for the games, for dancing and for every kind of infernal songs, and they abducted women for themselves with whom they had previously agreed, and they each had two or three women."<sup>1</sup>

The chronicler's ideal is the monogamous family. He is in favour of it not only because it was sanctified by Christian law, but also because it had gained decisive successes at least among the Polyane thanks to the victory of private property over the primitive *obshchina* property.

Among the Polyane the monogamous family became predominant somewhat earlier than among the other Slavonic tribes, and this is clearly stated in the chronicle. This was no doubt long before the chronicler's time. That is why he failed to see the tribe and speaks of it so obscurely in his writings.

In his later narrative regarding not only what the chronicler knew from reliable sources, but also the darker period of the history of Eastern Slavonic society, he used the word "tribe" in different ways. Kiy becomes the founder of a ruling dynasty among the Polyane ("But this Kiy ruled in his tribe"), similar to the way in which princes and probably dynasties appeared among the Drevlyane, Dregovichy, Novgorod Slavs and Polochane. Here we have an example of hereditary rule, at least in the chronicler's account, and the use of "tribe" to denote

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<sup>1</sup> *Lawrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 13; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 15.



dynasty. This gives rise to the concept of the princely tribe: "Ye are not princes, neither are ye of princely tribe, but I am of princely tribe," says Oleg to Askold and Dir. Solovyov was absolutely right when he noted this range in the chronicler's use of this word.<sup>1</sup> Tribe also meant a group of relatives as well as every one of them individually ("three brothers were chosen with their tribes," i.e., with their relatives). It is also used to denote "compatriot." (Oleg, using a ruse to entice Askold and Dir to the bank of the Dnieper, says that he is a merchant on his way to Byzantium, and invites them in the following words: "Come to us, your tribes." And also in the sense of a whole people ("from the Rus tribe, from the Varangian tribe"). This lack of clarity in the term indicates that it had lost its concrete content in Rus 11th-century society, and that it was used in a sense different to that which in the past had belonged to it alone.

The term "family," on the other hand, is proved by the sources to be nothing but the *familia* we know. "Family above all means *chelyad*, domestics, slaves." In *Zlatoust* of the 12th century we read: "Numerous family, or numerous possessions, gold and silver." Here the "family" is identical to the Greek *οὐδράποδα*. And once again: "One conspired against his neighbour, and robbed him of his family." Here the term family corresponds to the Greek *οἰκίται*. In the *Life of Nifont* of the 13th century it says: "I was alive, and my children and my family." In the *Prologue* of the 16th century we read: "Neither I, nor my family, nor my children, nor my fowl," etc.<sup>2</sup> This term still retains traces of relations which were real in some remote past.

This *familia* is very naturally interpreted as a large

<sup>1</sup> С. М. Соловьев, История России с древнейших времен, кн. I, СПб, изд. „Общественная польза“, стр. 49. (S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, St. Petersburg, Obshchestvennaya Polza Publishing House, p. 49.)

<sup>2</sup> И. Срезневский, Материалы для словаря древнерусского языка, СПб 1893, слово „семья“. (I. Sreznevsky, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Ancient Rus Language*, St. Petersburg, 1893, under "semya.")

patriarchal family, which developed from tribal relations. It is a unit which includes a number of freemen and bondmen under the patriarchal authority of the head of the family. That is why it should not be contrasted with the tribe, as the advocates of the "tribal theory" and their opponents were wont to do. Finally, the existence of a large family in no way contradicts the simultaneous existence of the village *obshchina*, with the former as a component.

We should note a fact, earlier pointed out by Kluchevsky, that the regional division of the Rus land under the first Rus princes did not at all coincide with its tribal division, as described in the *Chronicle*. "There was not a single region which held only one and an entire tribe at that; the greater part of the regions were populated by different tribes or their components. In some regions a single tribe was joined by the remnants of others."<sup>1</sup>

This problem is analysed by Tretyakov in the light of archaeological material. In studying the distribution of types of women's head-dress (sets of ornaments) in the period from the 11th to the 14th centuries, the author concludes that they fall into a pattern whose boundaries coincide "with those of the incipient feudal regions rather than with those of the ancient tribes." In the author's opinion, there were no tribal groups by the 11th and 13th centuries. "The fate of the various ethnical components was different, since they themselves differed. There is a substantial dissimilarity of language and garments, the specific features of the economy, buildings, religious beliefs, ornaments, etc. Some of them endured through the ages, and traces of them are to be found even today, while others were less viable" and were subjected to more frequent and rapid change. Women's ornaments fall under this last category. Their distribution was largely determined by the fashions prevalent among women who pur-

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<sup>1</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, op. cit., p. 161.



chased the ornaments in the economic centres where they were produced in quantity by the handicraft industries.

Tretyakov's observations led him to revise the interpretation of the chronicler's term "tribe" and to conclude that the "tribes" in question were social bodies in a state of transition from tribal to feudal organizations.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the author's archaeological data support Kluchevsky's contentions. It appears, therefore, that there is a purely territorial division, replacing the tribal, in the regions around the great cities (Kiev, Novgorod, Smolensk, Chernigov, etc.) which is a sign of the destruction of the tribe when a new type of non-tribal relations supervenes.

Other indications of this kind are to be found in the chronicle as well as in *Russkaya Pravda*. The first article of the earliest *Pravda*, parts of which in any case date to not later than the 8th-9th centuries, says that the blood feud could be waived and substituted by wergild. The fact that the participants of the blood feud along the male and female lines are determined by an authority other than the tribal and, it should be noted, not within the framework of the tribe, but of a large family, indicates that society is already ruled by a non-tribal organization and that the blood feud is a relic of extinct relations. This earliest *Pravda* deals with both *chelyad* and slaves, and is permeated with proprietary elements. The *Pravda of*

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<sup>1</sup> P. N. Tretyakov, *Archaeological Data on the Settlement of Ancient Rus Tribes*. *Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, No. 4, Moscow-Leningrad, 1937, pp. 33-51. Artsikhovsky's objections to Tretyakov's article (*ibid.*, pp. 53-61) show the need to continue research in this field. It is to be expected that it will facilitate our understanding of the chronicle's narrative of the settlement of the Slavs in Eastern Europe.

Rybakov thinks that there are "two elements" in Rus village of the 10th-12th centuries, namely, "the ancient tribal element and the new urban element," that the production of the great feudal centres is superimposed on the map of the tribal types (handicraft production—*Author*) without regard for the old tribal boundaries, but not "superceding the old tribal types." Thus, Rybakov discovers the simultaneous existence of the old and the new and suggests that we do not confuse them in our conclusions.

the *Yaroslavichy*, which is a step forward from the earliest part of *Pravda*, records certain results of the evolution: field land and apiaria were private property; a heavy fine was exacted for infringing their boundaries; the meadows appeared to be still common property; the landowner's horses and those of the peasants he holds in fee grazed in the same meadow. There was evidence of a sharp proprietary inequality.

All this is not by any means new for the 10th and 11th centuries. What is new is the fact that the lawgiver had to formulate certain laws. The facts underlying them are of a nature that rules out the possibility of their sudden appearance.

It should be remembered that there are other indications of the existence of a non-tribal organization: 1) changes in the form of settlements, with the old strongholds being superseded by non-fortified villages with individual fortified homesteads which play the part of the West-European castles; 2) the hereditary nature of princely rule; 3) the taxation and penal systems. We find Princess Olga instituting tributes and dues, and probably rents as well, in a conquered land in the 10th century. The accepted units of taxation, such as the *dym*, *ralo*, and plough, which testify to the regularity of various levies on the people, were well known among the Slavs long before Olga's time, in the early 9th century, if not earlier.

This does not look like the tribal system at all. The patriarchal household *obshchina*, itself a transition stage from the family, which sprang up from group marriage and was based on matriarchal right, to the modern individual family, developed parallel to the evolution of the rural *obshchina*, or mark, a characteristic feature of which was the individual economy of its members.

This seems to be convincing. But there is no unanimity of approach among our scholars. In both the old and the new literature on the subject we find opinions to the effect that the *verv* of *Russkaya Pravda* is not an *obshchi-*



na of neighbours, but one of consanguinity, a family *obshchina*.

Leontovich is one of the outstanding representatives of this school. He interpreted the *verv* as a family *obshchina* of the *zadruga* type. But he considers it to be not merely a family *obshchina*, but a transition stage to an *obshchina* of neighbours. "By admitting elements foreign to the family and being partly based on contractual principles, the *zadruga* relegated patriarchal consanguinity to the background."<sup>1</sup>

This view was supported by Bestuzhev-Ryumin,<sup>2</sup> Yefimenko<sup>3</sup> and Blumenfeld<sup>4</sup>, and opposed by Vladimirsky-Budanov. "It would be strange practice indeed," he wrote, "to go about a family, however large ('to seek a thief on the *verv*'), looking for a thief, particularly when there is common usage, as is the case in the *zadruga*." "Instead of the *pogost*, the same unit of territorial division in the southern as well as the northern lands, is called the *verv* (a derivative of the Indo-European *Warf*). The *sotnya* corresponds to that unit not only in the urban, but in the provincial division as well, while the *guba* is the accepted term in the Pskov and the Novgorod lands."<sup>5</sup>

Presnyakov also believes that "we should not be justified in assuming the existence of blood bonds among the

<sup>1</sup> F. I. Leontovich, *The Meaning of Verv as Used by the "Russkaya Pravda" and the "Politsa Statute" in Comparison with the Zadruga of the South-Western Slavs*, *Journal of the Ministry of Education*, April 1867, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> K. N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, *Russian History*, Vol. I, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> А. Я. Ефименко, *Исследования народной жизни*, М. 1884, стр. 238 и сл. (A. Y. Yefimenko, *Studies of Popular Life*, Moscow, 1884, p. 238 et seq.)

<sup>4</sup> Г. Ф. Blumenфельд, *О формах землевладения в древней Руси*, Одесса 1884, стр. 53 и др. (G. F. Blumenfeld, *Forms of Landownership in Ancient Rus*, Odessa, 1884, p. 53, etc.)

<sup>5</sup> М. Ф. Владимирский-Буданов, *Обзор истории русского права*, Киев 1907, стр. 78. (M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, Kiev, 1907, p. 78.) Also his reviews of Blumenfeld's *Forms of Landownership in Ancient Rus*, *Kievskie Universitetskie Izvestia* for 1884.

members of the *verv* in Rus in the period of *Russkaya Pravda*. . . . The *verv* of *Russkaya Pravda* is already a community of neighbours based on the territorial principle and not on consanguinity."<sup>1</sup> Pavlov-Silvansky<sup>2</sup> and many of the old Russian historians adhered to this view.

Leshkov in his *The Russian People and the State* examines this problem in great detail. He stresses that "almost 15 articles are to be found in *Russkaya Pravda* on the *verv*. . . . Exhaustive study of these articles shows that *Pravda* gives a detailed description of the *verv* and not only as a mere hint or hypothetical phantom but as a living being in action." "*Lyudi, mir* and *verv* are different expressions of one and the same concept." He then adds another term, *pogost*, denoting the same thing, and infers that the *verv* is a rural territorial *obshchina* with an administration of its own.<sup>3</sup>

Belyayev also viewed the *verv* as an *obshchina* without consanguinity. "The Russian land was then divided into *obshchinas*, called *vervs*, whose members were linked by mutual guarantee. . . . This *verv* arrangement prevailed in Rus from time immemorial."<sup>4</sup>

Among Soviet historians it was Yushkov who gave most attention to the study of the *verv*. In his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus* and elsewhere, he objects to the interpretation of the *verv* as a rural *obshchina* and suggests that we regard it as a large family. He attempts to make use of the only Russian source which

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<sup>1</sup> А. Е. Пресняков, Лекции по русской истории, т. I, М. 1938, стр. 55. (A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1938, p. 55.)

<sup>2</sup> Н. П. Павлов-Сильванский, Феодализм в удельной Руси, СПб 1910, стр. 99. (N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 99.)

<sup>3</sup> В. Лешков, Русский народ и государство, М. 1858, стр. 99, 103 и др. (V. Leshkov, *The Russian People and the State*, Moscow, 1858, pp. 99, 103, etc.)

<sup>4</sup> И. Д. Беляев, Лекции по истории русского законодательства, изд. 2, М. 1888, стр. 189. (I. D. Belyayev, *Lectures on the History of Russian Legislation*, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1888, p. 189.)



speaks of the *verv*, namely, the *Pravda of the Yaroslavi-  
chy* and the *Extensive Pravda*. While admitting the exist-  
ence of the rural *obshchina* in the Rus of that period, he  
denies mention of it in the source-material. "The records  
give us no indication of the existence of the rural *obshchi-  
na* in the 9th-10th centuries. But this does not mean that it  
did not exist."<sup>1</sup> He adds: "If we accept the *verv* as a *za-  
druga* it would mean that the rural *obshchina* contained  
disintegrating tribal groups, that patriarchal relations in  
it were still rather strong.

"But we should realize that the rural *obshchina* itself  
was subject to decomposition in the prefeudal period" (an  
exposition of the signs and causes of this follows).<sup>2</sup> From  
the preceeding page we learn that the "large family had  
*long* been subject to decay in Kiev Rus (*author's italics*)."<sup>3</sup>  
Yushkov admits then that the large family and the rural  
*obshchina* existed side by side in Kiev Rus and that both  
these systems, in his opinion, had begun to "decay." There-  
fore, leaving aside the question of the simultaneous exist-  
ence in Kiev Rus of the rural *obshchina* and the large fam-

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<sup>1</sup> С. В. Юшков, Очерки по истории феодализма в Киевской Руси, М.—Л., 1939, стр. 8. (S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1939, p.8.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 11. In his *Общественно-политический строй и право Киевского государства* (*The Social and Political System and Law of the Kiev State*) published in 1949, Yushkov once again rejects my view of the *verv* and reproaches me for denying the existence of any survivals of the tribal system in Kiev Rus in the 11th and 12th centuries, being hopelessly unable to see the difference between "the big family" and the "large patriarchal family."

The first assertion is simply not accurate since Yushkov himself quotes me on that very page (p. 87) as saying that the tribal organization *did not*, of course, pass away *without trace*. (*Italics mine.—Author.*) His second assertion is absolutely accurate: it is true that I do not see any difference between the "big family" and the "patriarchal family" even with the addition of the word "large," as my opponent does. In any case, Engels uses the terms *patriarchalische Hausgenossenschaft*, *patriarchalische familie*, *Hausgenossenschaft* in the same sense. (F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, pp. 57-60.) For details see my article on the *verv* in *Voprosy Istorii*, No. 8, 1951.

ily, which I accept entirely, there remains the interpretation of the *verv* of the *Russkaya Pravda*.

I see no need to examine every article of the *Pravda*, quoted by Yushkov, inasmuch as he himself considers most of them to be neutral, so to speak. It is only the article which mentions the "*wild vira*"<sup>1</sup> that Yushkov regards as a serious obstacle to the interpretation of the *verv* as a large family.

To prove that the *verv* is not a rural *obshchina* but a large family, Yushkov states that the "*verv* was an insignificant group" which, he thinks, was why the princes allowed it to pay the *vira* in instalments. But it should be remembered that the size of the *viras* of the "barbarian" *Pravdas*, including the *Russkaya*, were inherited from the tribal system, when the wergild was paid by the tribe as a whole<sup>2</sup>, and that the establishment of the wild *vira* was necessitated by the weakening of the community bonds when responsibility for crimes became individual. The practice of "following the tracks" speaks for the size of the territory of the *verv-mir*. I think Presnyakov was right in his interpretation of this practice. He compares the "search for the thief on the *verv*" (Art. 70) with "following the tracks" (Art. 77 of the *Extensive Pravda*)<sup>3</sup> which corresponds to the "search for the murderer." ("And if an *ognishchanin* is killed in a raid, or if the murderer is not found, the wergild shall be paid by the *verv* in which the body was discovered.")<sup>4</sup> The survivals of Russian law in the Galich land indicate that the "tracks" were followed on the territory of the neighbouring *obshchina*.

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<sup>1</sup> Yushkov has in mind the statement made in my *Kiev Rus*, 3rd ed., p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Н. П. Грацианский, О материальных взысканиях в варварских Правдах („Историк-марксист" № 7, 1940, стр. 54—64.) (N. P. Gratsiansky, *Exactions in Kind in the Barbarian Pravdas. Istorik-Marxist*, No. 7, 1940, pp. 54-64.)

<sup>3</sup> А. У. Пресняков, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-65 et seq.

<sup>4</sup> Краткая „Правда", Академический список, ст. 20. (*Brief Pravda*, Academic Copy, Art. 20.)



In the Galich land this practice was still in force as late as the 15th century. A deed dating to the year 1422, concerning the complaint of Ilya, the Bishop of Pere-myshl, describes an investigation by the Polish King of a controversy regarding the boundaries of the bishopric. The Bishop asserted that his church land bordered on Fox's Ford, as was the case under Prince Yury and "many other rulers." The controversy was settled on the testimony of the "*zemyane*<sup>1</sup> and *starostas*"<sup>2</sup> who corroborated the Bishop's statement. They testified that "the Bishop's people had to *follow the tracks* up to Fox's Ford and pass it on to the *topolnichane*, because the latter have a common boundary with the Bishop."

The peasants of the Peremyshl Bishop well knew the boundary up to which they were obliged to "follow the tracks" (they were not freed of this obligation even then, in the 15th century). In a 1413 deed, also written in Russian, the boundaries of Pokoslovtsi and Bludniki villages are similarly defined: "And where these boundaries meet, master Miroslav *has to take over and follow the tracks*, since the tracks were led up to him by the son of Voit and the elders."<sup>3</sup>

Without going into detail I wish to note that this practice would have been entirely superfluous if this were a large family, where all are kin and know each other, and could give up their relative who committed the crime, or pay for him without any "following of the tracks." It is not fortuitous that this following of the tracks is completely paralleled in the *Polish Pravda*, with its unquestionable rural *obshchina*.

Presnyakov conclusively explains why the term *veru* disappeared from the Russian language rather early, a fact also noted by Yushkov. He thinks that it was on its way out as early as the 11th and 12th centuries. It proved

<sup>1</sup> *Zemyane*—landowners obliged to render military service.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> *Starosta*—local official, bailiff.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> *Acta grodzkie i ziemskie*, t. VII, No. 82. (*Author's italics.*)

unsuitable because it had earlier denoted a related group and would not fit the purely territorial, non-related unit.<sup>1</sup>

However, the disappearance of the term *verv* should be treated with caution, because the *Politsa Statute*, for instance, mentions it as late as the 15th and 16th centuries, and probably the 17th as well, to denote an *obshchina* of neighbours. This is due to the fact that in Rus archaisms disappeared more rapidly than in Politsa, a miniature state with an area of about 90 square miles which took great care to preserve its traditions.

The only way out is to resort to the documents, which should always be taken as a whole, including direct and indirect evidence. It should above all be borne in mind that both *Pravdas* (the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* and the *Extensive Pravda*) and the records of the 11th and 12th centuries which mention the *verv* describe a society in which the individual family, private landownership, large landholdings and other features of feudalism are undoubtedly dominant. Hence, it would appear *a priori* that these documents at least imply the existence of a rural mark community and not of tribal organizations, which had undoubtedly passed away, (though not, of course, without trace). "The longer the gens existed in its village..." wrote Engels, "the more the consanguineous character of the ties retreated before territorial ties. *The gens disappeared in the mark community*, in which, however, sufficient traces of the original kinship of the members were visible."<sup>2</sup>

But the documents give us direct information of the *verv* without, however, a single suggestion of the existence of consanguinity among its members.

The existence of the feudal lord and his demesne is clearly evident from the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*. Side by side with the *obshchina* there is a section of rich feudal landowners, where arable land, *apiaria*, hunting-

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., pp. 164-65 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, op. cit., p. 302. (*Author's italics.*)



grounds and implements of production are manifestly the private property of individuals. All these are bought, sold and bequeathed.

The feudal lord's offensive against the *obshchina*, his triumph over it, as well as its internal evolution are also evident in the emergence of certain indigent elements who are forced to seek work and protection from the feudal lord. They are the *ryadovichy*, *zakups*, "*vdachas*"<sup>1</sup> and *izgois*, of whom I shall say more later.<sup>2</sup>

At the moment it is important to note the main aspects of the *verv-mir* in order to show how the tribal *obshchina* evolved into the rural *obshchina* of neighbours, or the mark, in which the soil was individually cultivated, at first with a periodical, and later with a final redistribution of arable and meadows. In the south, this process began earlier than in the north, where traces of these old relations persisted much longer. In the South the tribal *obshchina* disappeared earlier and was only faintly reflected in the *Russkaya Pravda*.

It is of the rural *obshchina* that some of the terms—*mir*, *verv*—in the *Pravdas* speak. The earliest part of the *Pravda* in its Novgorod version, with traces of northern terminology, mentions no *verv*, but only the *mir*. "And if some one takes another's horse, or weapons, or clothes, and that one discovers it in his *mir*, he shall have his own back, and three *grivnas* for the offence."<sup>3</sup> The *mir* of the earliest *Pravda* corresponds to the *verv* of the *Extensive Pravda*. This is indicated by Art. 13 just quoted which corresponds to Art. 70 of the *Extensive Pravda*: "And if the land be cleft, the thief shall be sought on the *verv*." These articles deal with different things, but the lost thing and the thief are unquestionably searched for on one and the same territory, which is the *verv-mir*. The *Exten-*

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<sup>1</sup> I use this term conditionally, since it is used in the Karamzin Copy of the *Russkaya Pravda*.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter V.—Tr.

<sup>3</sup> *Brief Pravda*, Art. 13.

*sive Pravda* which appeared three centuries later and dealt with the South, apparently uses the parallel term *grad* instead of the *mir* of the earliest *Pravda*. "If any one loses a horse, or weapons, or clothes and announces this in the market-place, and later finds it in his *grad*, he shall take his own back"....<sup>1</sup> In this article, which undoubtedly corresponds to Art. 13 of the *Brief Pravda*, the term *grad* does not merely denote a town, but an urban district. In Olga's message to the Drevlyane, *grad* not only denotes the town proper, but also the surrounding lands. "All your *grads* have delivered themselves unto me and have agreed to pay tribute, and are working in their fields and on their lands, but by refusing to pay tribute you are going to die of hunger."<sup>2</sup> The *verv* is often mentioned in the *Extensive Pravda* as well as in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* compiled in Kiev about the middle of the 11th century but retaining some earlier features. The *Pravdas* and the *Politsa Statute*<sup>3</sup> enable us to decipher the term *verv* to some extent.

The *Politsa Statute* is the only Slav code apart from *Russkaya Pravda* which mentions the term *verv* and draws a distinction between the *verv* and the big family.

Art. 33 of the *Statute* makes clear reference to the big family: "If brothers, or others who have the right to participate in the sharing (whether the brothers are near or distant, or the sons of the father, or other relatives—*Author*) have not yet shared, they have everything in common; the good and the evil, the profit and the loss, and the debts; to whom they owe and whosoever owes

<sup>1</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Art. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 946; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Politsa* was a miniature Horvatian republic on the coast of the Adriatic Sea with a social system which had much in common with the system reflected in *Russkaya Pravda* in terminology as well as in some of its legal institutions. See Б. Д. Греков, *Полица. Опыт изучения общественных отношений в Полице XV—XVII веков*, М. 1951. (B. D. Grekov, *Politsa. An Essay in the Study of Social Relations in Politsa in the 15th-17th Centuries*. Moscow, 1951.)



them—all this is in common, until they share, and when they do share, each one is to have his share." This is a big family, and it is not called the *verv* in the *Politsa Statute*. The *verv* is described differently. Art. 59a reads:

"The Law on the Sharing of Woods or Pastures (*ko-tar*).<sup>1</sup> If it happened that a village decided to share its woods or pastures because its inhabitants cannot or do not wish to pasture or tend in common, i.e., if one or more demanded of the village a part which they could receive, if the whole village decided to share, let them share and see what is whose: first of all, a woodless pasture cannot be apportioned because the villagers not only of this village but of the neighbouring village as well cannot be prevented from pasturing since they are not beyond the third pasture, as was said above.

"The wood can be divided as follows: first of all, if the *verv* knows what parts were due from the *plemenschina* within the village to each according to measure and to the *verv* right of succession, there would be no need to look for a way of sharing the wood other than according to the right of the *verv* and the number of persons, *podvornitsas* (plots) and *plemenschinas*....

"If the *verv* does not know and is unable to find out the parts within itself from the *plemenschina*, which is usually the case when there are more members in the village who participate in the sharing, then the wood shall be divided thus: first of all and according to the ancient rule, each old lawful garden holding and *podvornitsa* should receive a part."

Here the term *verv* is used in a dual sense: 1) the *verv* as a public body and 2) the *verv* as a line of successors. *Podvornitsa* is the plot attached to the homestead.

<sup>1</sup> *Kotar* has several meanings. It is best interpreted here as denoting a pasture. The *verv* in this case is a part of the village whose inhabitants have already received their share of the fields and have their individual gardens and plots but are connected with each other by closer ties of neighbourhood than the rich privileged landowners who left the *obshchina* earlier and had already risen above it.

This text makes it clear that the *verv* is not a big family, "but part of a village, the part that lives on the *verv plemenshchina*,"<sup>1</sup> and consists of "*verv* brethren,"<sup>2</sup> who are not relatives, and which had already divided up its land "according to measure and to the *verv*," i.e., according to the right of succession, and is preparing to divide its woods in the same manner. The *verv* in this case is a village community which its most opulent members had already left.<sup>3</sup>

A comparison of the two documents clearly shows that the *verv* is a definite piece of territory. "And if an *ognishchanin* is killed in a raid, or the murderer is not found, the wer-gild shall be paid by the *verv* in which the body was discovered."<sup>4</sup> It is absolutely clear that the corpse was discovered on some one's certain territory. The responsibility for the crime is borne by the people who live there and who have mutual interests, otherwise they could not have been held collectively responsible. Hence, the *verv* is a social and territorial unit. The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* partially reveals the nature of this community and the bonds uniting its members. The *verv* is inhabited by *lyudi* who are well aware of their rights and responsibilities. Until recently they had been held collectively responsible for crimes committed on their territory. Now, the law explains, the responsibility does not always fall on the group as a whole; there are cases when the culprit must answer for himself. If the administrator of the prince's estate is deliberately killed "then the killer is to pay for him 80 *grivnas*, but the *lyudi* are not to pay."<sup>5</sup> The *lyudi* are to pay only if the selfsame administrator was killed in a raid and the murderer is unknown; then the fine is paid by the *lyudi*,

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<sup>1</sup> *Verv plemenshchina*—community land.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> *Verv brethren* are not relatives. The Politsa people called each other brothers, and differentiated between near brothers, i.e., relatives, and distant kinsmen, and *verv brethren* who were not relatives.

<sup>3</sup> B. D. Grekov, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> *Brief Pravda*, Academic Copy, Art. 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, Academic Copy, Art. 19.



the members of the *verv* on whose territory the body was discovered.

The *Politsa Statute* virtually contains the same provisions, except that the *Russkaya Pravda* describes the *verv* of the 11th and 12th centuries, while the *Politsa Statute* refers to the 15th and 16th centuries. In *Politsa*, the *verv* plays a less important role than in Kiev Rus.

The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* is a special law, akin in spirit to Charlemagne's *Capitulare de villis*. It was intended to protect the interests of the prince's estate surrounded by the peasant *verus-mirs*, which were antagonistic to their not very peaceful neighbour, the feudal lord. It was not without reason that the feudal lord fortified his home and protected himself with drastic laws. The peasant *mirs* were intended for imposing collective responsibility on its members. It is understandable why the prince's *Pravda* stresses this aspect of the *verv*.

The *Extensive Pravda* of the early 12th century gives us a more vivid picture of social relations and enables us to examine the mechanism of the *verv*.

The *verv* is not to pay anything if the body discovered on its land has not been identified. "And no payment shall be made by the *verv* for the bones and for the body if his name is unknown, and he is a stranger."<sup>1</sup> The *verv* has to deliver the robber with his wife and children to be subjected to plunder. Hitherto the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* contained no such provision, and this testifies to the growing responsibility of individual families, in short, their detachment from the *verv*. The same article specifically states that the *lyudi* do not pay for the robber."<sup>2</sup> The members of the *verv* are held responsible not only for murder: "If the land is cleft or there is trace of hunting or fowling then the thief shall be sought in the *verv* or a fine paid."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Art. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 70.

In this case too the *verv* was obliged to find the culprit, pay a fine, or make good the loss.

Finally, the *Extensive Pravda* describes the highly interesting practice of the "wild *vira*," which indicates that in the 12th century the *verv* stopped aiding all its members and helped only those who took care of themselves, i.e., those who subscribed to the "wild *vira*." "He who does not subscribe to the wild *vira*, shall not be helped by the people, but pays himself."<sup>1</sup> This proves that by the 12th century the members of the *verv* had ceased to be equal in their rights, and that a group of wealthier people appeared among them who could afford to pay dues giving the right of participation in the "wild *vira*." Incidentally, the *Novgorod Annals* for 1209 report that in Novgorod the "wild *vira*" was collected from merchants, i.e., rich people. This shows the disintegration of the old *verv*.

The Polish community (*Gegenote*) presents a similar picture. It was also held responsible for murder committed on its territory. In essence, it was similar to what we have just seen in *Russkaya Pravda*, but the power of the feudal lord over the community was stated with greater clarity. The *overlord* summoned the *Gegenote*, he exacted the *Schuld*, etc.<sup>2</sup>

The *Russkaya Pravda* lacks clarity which was required neither by the editor nor by the practising lawyer, since everything it said was clear as it was. But much was not clear to the German who compiled the *Polskaya Pravda* in a foreign country. He had to pay heed to every detail and set it down for practical purposes; the German who had seized the Polish land had to know the law of his subject people.

Politsa, which had always striven to maintain its national character in face of powerful neighbours (Hungary, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Art. 8.

<sup>2</sup> For details of the *obshchina* according to *Russkaya Pravda* and *Polskaya Pravda* see Grekov, *Peasants in Rus from the Earliest Times to the 17th Century*, Book 1, Moscow, 1952, p. 283 et seq.



later the Republic of Venice), on whom it was politically dependent, also strove to set down its laws, its *Pravda*, with care and have it approved by the Venice Government.

Nevertheless, the *Russkaya Pravda* also presents a comprehensive picture of social relations if we make use not only of what is set forth in black and white, but also of the implications.

It is widely accepted that the earliest, undated, part of the so-called *Brief Pravda* does not mention the relations of the society it describes to the land. Generally speaking, that is so. But if we delve into what the earliest *Pravda* says and try to visualize the life described in it, we shall hardly be satisfied with the superficial impressions widely accepted today.

Undoubtedly, this *Pravda* speaks primarily of the *muzhi*—freemen, men in general. But it is not difficult to discern the men-at-arms, the knights, in the accepted sense. We find the knight with his horse from which he is inseparable and the weapons which he never puts aside, and, finally, his armour. Their code of honour, as was the case among similar groups throughout Europe, indicates that they did not appear overnight. But it is patent that West-European chivalry was deeply rooted in the land. They were fed by the peasants who lived on their land, they were a component of the class of feudal landowners, through the land they were connected with the village, the *obshchina*, whatever their relationship with it may have been.

Every historian of Ancient Rus is naturally faced with the task of examining the way of life of the *muzhi* of the earliest *Russkaya Pravda*. This problem has given rise to a wide divergence of opinion, although some prefer to bypass this obscure subject. But we must admit that it is too important to be ignored. Even if the state of the sources does not allow a precise answer to this question, we have no right to ignore the faint hints which they contain. They should be commented upon.

Art. 13 of the earliest *Pravda* reads: "And whosoever takes another's horse, or weapons, or clothes, and the other discovers them in *his own mir*, he shall take his own and three *grivnas* for the offence."

Since this article is concerned with the knights, or *muzhi*, whose interests are reflected in the text of *Pravda* (witness the horse, the weapons, the clothes), the connection between the *muzhi* and the *mirs* must needs be explained.

Part of the problem is quite clear, but there is an aspect of it which is not clarified by the source, and therefore more or less substantiated conjectures have to be made: 1) the *mir* is unquestionably the *obshchina* or *verv*; 2) the *obshchina* has definite boundaries which are recognized by the law when a search is started for lost things; 3) he who is searching for what he has lost, in this case presumably the knight, or *muzh*, is linked with *his mir*; this contention is easily maintained.

The text in question does not indicate the exact nature of this connection, but its presence is obvious from the statement that this *mir* is styled as *his mir* by *Pravda*, i.e., a *mir* with which he is connected and where he apparently lives.

This riddle may be partially solved with the aid of other articles of the same *Pravda*. Although Art. 17 is dated differently to the first articles, it speaks of a lord possessing a "manor-house," which serves as a refuge for a bondman who hit a "*free muzh*." This lord is sufficiently powerful to offer resistance to those searching for the bondman. The problem is to discover where the lord's manor-house stands.

But are we to ignore the existence of *obshchinas*, or *mirs*?

A simple hypothesis will help to solve this problem. The lord and the *muzh* are synonyms, and the action takes place on the territory of the *mir*, i.e., the *obshchina*.



Whether the scene of action is a town or a village is immaterial in this case, because with the exception of a few major cities, the towns had not yet become completely isolated from the *mir*. It is noteworthy that the town in the *Extensive Pravda* is placed on the same level as the manor-house: "And he who finds his bondman in whose-soever *gorod* or manor-house. . . ." (Art. 125 of the Karamzin Copy.)<sup>1</sup> Thus the question arises as to the nature of this manor-house where a runaway bondman can find refuge and which can stand comparison with a *gorod*, i.e., in this case a stronghold.

The most obvious answer is that the manor-houses or the *gorods* are strongholds owned by individuals. This is partly supported by the testimony (of later origin, it is true) contained in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* about the princes' *gorods* or estates, which had obviously appeared earlier than the date of their mention in the *Chronicle*.

Following the adoption of Christianity, Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavich ordered the payment of a tithe for the maintenance of the Kiev Desyatinnaya Church "from his own property and from that of *his own gorods*." The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* explains what *gorod* meant by calling Vyshgorod, a princely manorial estate on the edge of the city, a "*gorod*." ("For Vyshgorod was Olga's *gorod*.")

The comparison of the manor-house with the *gorod*, the possibility that a fugitive from justice should seek refuge therein, and the lord's refusal to give him up, now become clear. This was obviously habitual, if a special article of the highly laconic code was devoted to them.

<sup>1</sup> Although there is reason to believe the Karamzin Copy to be a compilation, yet the words "in the manor-house" are contained also in one of the versions of the *Extensive Pravda* which undoubtedly contains archaic elements. (The Second Archaeographic Copy, Art. 114, Academy of Science.) Cf. С. В. Юшков, Руська Правда, Киев 1935, стр. 152, стр. 100. (S. V. Yushkov, *Ruska Pravda*, Kiev, 1935, p. 152, Art. 100.)

If that is so, and there can hardly be any other interpretation, then the *muzhi* of the earliest *Pravda*, who are not accidentally depicted as being always armed (even at banquets) and always ready to unsheathe in defence of the honour of their caste, are obviously the proprietors of the strongholds called manor-houses or *gorods*, where they themselves live surrounded by their *chelyad*, whose duty it is to feed and clothe them, and when the occasion arises, also to defend them.<sup>1</sup> The manor-house or *gorod* is the bailey of the mediaeval knight who dwells in his castle, the family hearth.

The economic and political growth of the *gorods* gradually placed them at the head of the *mirs* and this eventually led to the substitution of the term *mir* by the term *gorod*. This is the meaning of the chronicle's report of the Drevlyane *gorods* which had surrendered to Olga and had "resumed work in their fields." This also explains the absence of the term *gorod* in the earliest *Pravda*, where it is covered by the term *mir*, as well as the substitution of the term *mir* by the term *gorod* in the later *Pravda* of the 12th century.<sup>2</sup>

In Poland the word *gorod* is used in almost the same sense.

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<sup>1</sup> Such an interpretation of the word *muzh* does not exclude its use to denote a freeman in general, since the latter may have also had the right to carry arms. The Polish knight, a free landowner, is analogous in this case.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Art. 36: "And if it happens in the same *gorod* the plaintiff must go to the end of it. . . ." Art. 39: "No one is to be led abroad from his home *gorod*. . . ." In Art. 114 "whose *gorod* whatsoever" is contrasted with the "manor-house." Here the *gorod* is obviously a fortified bailey. Evers, I think, correctly understood the word *gorod* to mean a district. "Initially," he wrote, "*gorod* in the Slav language signifies a *locality*, and later on a *fortified place*, a *castrum*. [See Трехязычный лексикон и Церковный словарь. (*Three-Language Lexicon and the Church Dictionary*.)] Evidently, this word denotes not only these places proper, but the lands and industries dependent on them. . . . Prior to the 18th century in Russia the word *gorod* denoted a grant to some boyar of the administration of a strip of land, often very extensive, which he held in fee." (I. F. Evers, op. cit., p. 24, Note 1.)



The Horvatian *Vinodol Statute* of 1288 mentions the *gorod* as being at the head of the surrounding villages and forming with them the "*obshchina* of the *gorod*."<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

The most feasible interpretation of Arts. 13 and 17 of the earliest *Pravda* is that the knights, or *muzhi*, are connected with the *obshchinas*, or *mirs*, and live on their territories in strongly built manor-houses, capable of protecting their owner and making him "proud and violent," as a later source puts it, and a threat to the surrounding population.

This danger was quite real, because the lord of the manor eventually subjugated the surrounding rural population.

I think the facts adduced show the stages in the disintegration of the tribal system among the Slavs of the Dnieper and the Volga. The mark, or *obshchina*, arose on the ruins of the patriarchal tribe, and did not exclude the existence of the big patriarchal family whose evolution we have witnessed. This process was far from peaceful: the chronicle hints at the struggle between the old and the new systems.

To sum up, the Eastern Slavs, like the other peoples, have passed through the same stages in their development: the classless tribal system, in the course of its disintegration, was replaced by an *obshchina* of neighbouring families that existed side by side with the big family community.

In the 8th and 9th centuries survivals of the tribal system still existed, but had disappeared by the 11th century.

In the earliest Russian written records we find a class society with a long history.

The mass of ploughmen organized into *obshchinas*

<sup>1</sup> B. B. Ягич, Закон Винодольский, СПб 1880, ст. 14, 16, 37, 58. (V. V. Jagić, *The Vinodol Law*, St. Petersburg, 1880, Arts. 14, 16, 37, 58.) Б. Д. Греков. Винодол. 1948, стр. 48—53. (B. D. Grekov, *Vinodol*, 1948, pp. 48-53.)

continues to exist, but its constitution changed under the impact of private property. The members of the *obshchina* have their individual holdings. *Dym*, *ralo* and plough became the units of taxation, a practice unknown in the tribal community. The village *obshchina*, as we know from the earliest Russian written sources, was under strong influence of the state: the members of the *obshchina* were bound to pay customs (reckoned per *dym*, or per *ralo*, or per plough), they rendered military service at the instance of the authorities, and performed various services, such as cartage, road-building, the construction of fortifications, etc.

It is clear that the *obshchina* was systematically assimilated by the growing nobility intent on enlarging its landholdings at the expense of the common peasant land and enslaving the farmers. The *obshchina* itself does not remain immutable: the rise of the more wealthy upper strata, a process which began some time before, is an indication that there was a proprietary inequality within the community. The poor, who also appear on the scene, were unable to carry out the obligations incumbent on members of the *obshchina*, and there was only one way out for them, to leave the community. This was the source of the notorious peasant "disorders." Being forced to leave the *obshchina*, in which his ancestors had been full-fledged members, the impoverished peasant sought refuge and found it where there was need of his physical power and the agricultural skill he had accumulated through the ages. But this vagrancy was, firstly, not an age-old custom, and, secondly, it affected only a part of the more indigent peasants.

Torn away from its native soil and dependent on the overlord, this section of the peasantry found itself side by side with those who had been enslaved earlier, and was almost lost in the mass of the *chelyad* on the estate. The first *smerd* who became dependent on the lord was naturally treated by the latter as a *kholop*.



This important subject will be dealt with at length later.

At the moment, we must examine the conditions which gave rise to the *gorod*.

## 2. THE BASIS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF *GORODS*

The speculation regarding the *gorods* in the last chapter is quite insufficient to solve the problem of the origin of Rus towns. Our records often imply entirely different things under the term *gorod*.

When the chronicler gives his account of the origin of the Rus state he mentions a number of *gorods* which Ryurik, he says, gave to his *muzhi*, adding that these *gorods* were ancient settlements ("the first settlements among the Novgorod Slavs"). The *muzhi* were settled in these localities, which were unquestionably fortified, to uphold the authority of the state in the provinces. These *gorods* (Polotsk, Rostov, Beloozero, etc.) were undoubtedly centres of considerable populated areas. In short, they were fortified political centres where the representatives of the authorities sat and ruled on behalf of the Novgorod prince.

The legend may well be questioned, but it is beyond doubt that the chronicler understood state rule to be exercised through *gorod* centres of this type.

They are alluded to in the chronicler's account of the 907 Treaty with the Greeks, in the list of Rus *gorods* claiming indemnity from the Greeks, among them Kiev, Chernigov, Pereyaslav, Polotsk, Rostov, Lubech and "other *grads*<sup>1</sup>: since they are the seats of the grand princes under Oleg."

It is these *gorods*, the centres of sizable regions, which are obviously referred to elsewhere in the same chronicle.

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<sup>1</sup> *Grad* is the Slavonic form of *gorod* and is today its phonetical variant.—Tr.

Some Duleby took their name from the *gorod* of Volyn and became known as the Volynyane; the Slovenes became known as the Novgorodites after Novgorod. The *gorods* of Cherven had a similar origin, for Cherven was the centre of a large Duleby territory containing other minor *gorods*.

Only substantial changes in the way of life and structure of a tribe could lead to the loss of its old name and the acquisition of a new name, that of a *gorod*.

Strongholds or places of refuge (*refugia*) were also called *gorods*. The story of Princess Olga's campaign against the Drevlyane in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* for 946 is well known: "But the Drevlyane retreated and locked themselves up in their *grads*. Then Olga and her son hurried towards Iskorosten *grad*, where her husband had been killed; she and her son camped near the *grad* but the Drevlyane fought staunchly from the *grad*, for they knew what awaited them for killing the prince. Olga besieged the *grad* all summer, but could not take it, and decided thus: she sent messengers to the *grad* saying: 'What are you waiting for? All your *grads* have delivered themselves unto me and have agreed to pay tribute, and are cultivating their fields and lands, but by refusing to pay tribute you will die of hunger.'"

This story deals with Drevlyane *gorods* in which the population took refuge, and of Iskorosten *grad* whose citizens had killed Olga's husband Igor, prior to her campaign. Iskorosten, then, is a *gorod* with a stable population and at the same time a fort which Olga could not capture.

There is every reason to classify Iskorosten as a *gorod* of the type examined above, while most of the other *gorods* probably belong to the type of *refugium* to which the entire population of the villages repaired in an emergency.

The *mesto* mentioned in the chronicle also merits attention. In the Novgorod land Princess Olga took possession of hunting-grounds, *znamenia*, *mestos* and *pogosts*. The



*mestos* in this case are settlements which later became known as *posads*<sup>1</sup> (cf. the Polish *miasto*).

The fortified castles of the big landowners, the princes and the boyars, were also called *gorods*. We know of some of them, although not all are called *gorods* in the sources, viz., Olzhichi, Vyshgorod, Izyaslavl, Predslavino, Berestovo, Rakoma, probably Budyatino, etc. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* specifically states that Vyshgorod was "Olga's grad."

Such fortified manorial estates usually appeared during the process of feudalization, when the fortified settlements of tribal society made way for unfortified settlements paralleled by the appearance of the castles of those who ruled over the mass and had to fortify their homes against the hostile population as well as against their neighbours, who were just as "violent and proud" as they themselves.

But neither the *refugium*, nor the fortified feudal castle (the "*khoromy*" of *Russkaya Pravda*), nor the garrisoned forts defending the state frontiers should be considered *gorods* in the economic, social or political sense.

In this latter sense the *gorod* is a settlement with an industrial and trading population to some extent detached from agriculture. Such a *gorod* is the result of the divorcement of "industrial and trade labour from the agricultural,"<sup>2</sup> a result of the social division of labour.

*Gorods* in the full sense of the word did not and could not appear under the tribal system.

"The contradiction between town and village begins

<sup>1</sup> The word *grad* in old Serbian denoted not only the stronghold, or castle, itself, but included also the population of the fort and its surroundings. См. Новакович, Град, трг, вароги; Т. Флоринский, Новейшие труды по изучению южно-славянской старины и народности („Киевские университетские известия", № 12, 1894, стр. 401). (St. Novakovich, *Grad, Trg, Varogy*; T. Florinsky, *Recent Papers on the History of Southern Slav Antiquity and Nationality. Kievskie Universitetskie Izvestia*, No. 12, 1894, p. 401.)

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Erste Abteilung, Bd. 5, Berlin 1932, S. 11.

with the transition from barbarism to civilization, from the tribal system to the state..."<sup>1</sup>

In the town "we first have the division of the population into two major classes, based directly on the division of labour and on the implements of production. The town implies the concentration of the population, the means of production, capital and demand and supply, while the village presents a quite different picture, and is a place of isolation and dissociation. The contradiction between town and village can exist only within the framework of private property." "The divorcement of town from village may also be viewed as a divorcement of capital from land tenure, as the beginning of capital's existence and its development independently of land tenure, i.e., as property based exclusively on labour and exchange."<sup>2</sup>

It is self-evident that towns do not spring up overnight. It should not be a source of confusion to us to discover that the handicraftsman in the nascent town is still connected to the soil which until recently fed both his grandfather and father. Yet it is a village no longer. It is the embryonic *gorod*.

It is only after we have defined the precise meaning of the term *gorod*, and the essence of the social process which leads to its appearance, that we should examine the sources.

The *gorod* could have appeared only under private property, i.e., in a class society. The tribal system knows no *gorods* in the precise sense of the term. The appearance of the *gorod* marks the destruction of the tribal system.

We have seen the development of society among the Eastern Slavs, and the origination of private property and of classes with it. We are now prepared to recognize that the appearance of *gorods* in Rus was quite natural "under the circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, op. cit., S. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., S. 39-40.



Our earliest sources tell us of the existence of *gorods* in Rus. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* refers to the earliest Rus *gorods* as being commonplace, but we learn very little of their origin or nature. Here archaeological investigation should come to the rescue. At the moment it can be asserted that inasmuch as these *gorods* were political, military and administrative centres, they must have had a stable population in which handicraftsmen and tradesmen naturally predominated. Only a special examination will reveal to what degree it had become detached from agriculture.

Today, following the appearance of Rybakov's *Handicrafts of Ancient Rus* we can safely assert that the appearance of the earliest *gorods* in Rus was due primarily to the development of handicrafts, the marketing of handicraft production and, of course, Rus foreign trade, the existence of which cannot reasonably be denied.

Rybakov begins his analysis of Rus handicrafts from the 4th century A. D., traces their development through the ages and in the 7th-8th centuries discovers the embryo of the *gorod*. "Under the circumstances the emergence of handicrafts," he writes, discussing the spread of fortified settlements, "was the decisive factor in converting the large village into a *gorod*." Owing to lack of exact data on the appearance of the first settlement of the *gorod* type in the middle Dnieper regions, Rybakov resorts to indirect evidence. Giant cemeteries consisting of a 1,000 and more burial mounds in the vicinity of large settlements point to their long existence and their large population.<sup>1</sup>

Rybakov's investigations serve as a basis for further studies of the origins of the ancient Rus *gorod*.

The development of society was not uniform over a territory so vast as that occupied by the Eastern branch of the Slavs, and progressive elements were to be found side by side with archaic forms, large sections of this territory remaining backward compared to the Dnieper and Volkhov

<sup>1</sup> B.A. Rybakov, *Handicrafts of Ancient Rus*, 1948, p. 99.

basins. It is natural, then, for the *gorod* (in the full sense of the word) to exist side by side with the *refugia*, or *tverds* which, as we have seen, are also called *gorods* in our sources.

Under favourable conditions the *refugia*, like the manorial estates, were turned into real *gorods*.

Those peasant hamlets that were situated on convenient highways and were centres of trade also developed into towns.

But as a centre of the handicrafts and trade, the *gorod*, whatever its origin, whether it be a former *grad*, *castle*, *demesne*, peasant settlement or fortress, was always the result of the social division of labour and constituted a settlement with a population engaged predominantly in handicrafts and trade.

Yushkov was the first Soviet scholar to examine the origin of Rus *gorods* in 1939.

His aim was to trace the genetic ties between the strongholds of tribal society and those of the large families, between the strongholds "girdled by unfortified settlements" and the *refugia*. He infers the existence of various types of *gorods* differing in origin, and partly in nature. He discovers: 1) tribal *gorods*, 2) *gorods* within the administrative framework of the principality, and 3) the princely *gorods* proper.

Lack of precise data prompted Yushkov to suggest the following description of the population of the tribal *gorods*: "The tribal authorities, the prince, his men-at-arms, the nobles, i.e., the tribal elders, were concentrated in the so-called tribal *gorods*. Since the tribal *gorod* was the centre of the entire tribal territory it would be natural for the handicraftsmen and tradesmen to settle down there owing to its greater population and stronger defences."<sup>1</sup>

I doubt the existence of Yushkov's tribal *gorods*, because their appearance among a tribe would signify that the

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kieo Rus*, p. 23.



tribe as such had ceased to exist. It would appear, therefore, that the tribal *gorod* cannot exist as a special type.

The difference between the princely *gorods* and those "within the general administrative framework" is defined by Yushkov as follows: the *gorods* of the latter group, the "*gorods* newly organized by the princes, are feudal centres, boroughs, in the vicinity of which with time the urban population—traders and handicraftsmen—settled and found protection. The local feudal lords held sway in the *gorods* where they had their baileys. The *gorod* therefore was a bulwark of feudal rule. But the *princely gorods proper* were feudal centres to a much greater degree than the *gorods* within the general administrative framework. I think that they were not only military and administrative, but also economic centres for the princes.

"The *volosts* and the villages of the princes gravitated towards them. It may be assumed that the food derived from the prince's lands was stored in the *gorod*. Its inhabitants were the prince's menials from the start, and not 'his subjects.' The princely *gorods* served as centres for the gradual assimilation of the surrounding territory as well as centres for the organization of manors and undertakings...."

These *gorods* were also set up by princes. "The emergence of the personal *gorods* of the princes was undoubtedly of great importance in the growth of princely landholdings and the princely demesne."<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that Yushkov sees the main difference between the last two types of *gorod* in that the first is a demesne of the prince, while the others are dependent on him as the supreme authority.

Yushkov has very accurately recorded the facts pertaining to the origin of the *gorods*, and stressed the existence of *gorods* in the prince's personal possession (I should add: in the bishop's and possibly in the boyar's

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-47. (Italics mine.—Author.)

as well) which differed in legal status from the *gorods* not personally held by the prince. He pointed to the ties between the *gorods* and the surrounding rural districts<sup>1</sup> and made a detailed investigation of their military, financial, administrative and judicial role.

In 1946, Tikhomirov published his *The Towns of Ancient Rus*, a major investigation which describes the structure of the *gorods*, the struggle of the towns-folk for their privileges, and the role of the *gorods* in the history of Russian culture. The author devotes a chapter to the origin of Rus *gorods*, a problem of paramount importance at the moment.

He criticizes Kluchevsky's theory of the origin of *gorods* and reproaches me for not having dealt with the subject in my *Kiev Rus* (which is true), offering his own solution to the problem. He says that the late 10th and early 11th centuries were a turning-point in the history of the Rus *gorods*, for it was then that the *posads* sprang up around the *gorods*, which became centres, attracting tradesmen and handicraftsmen.<sup>2</sup> "Of course," he says, "water-ways did help some *gorods* to gain ascendancy over others, but they did not in themselves bring about the appearance of *gorods*, and still less the handicraft and trading *posads* about them."<sup>3</sup> In his efforts to disprove Kluchevsky's theory of the predominant role of trade in pre-Kiev and Kiev Rus, Tikhomirov insists that it was only "of secondary importance" in the formation of *gorods*.

He gives an absolutely correct definition of the *gorods* as "permanent settlements which became centres of handicrafts and trade."<sup>4</sup> But in the chapter, entitled "The

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> М. Н. Тихомиров, Древнерусские города („Ученые записки Московского государственного университета“, вып. 99, М. 1946, стр. 31). (M. N. Tikhomirov, *The Towns of Ancient Rus. Uchoniye Zapiski Moskovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Issue 99, Moscow, 1946, p. 31.)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9.



Basis for the Appearance of *Gorods*," he includes in his definition of *gorod* only the *posads*, or districts at the approaches to the *gorod* and takes it to mean, apparently, only a stronghold, even though with "a stable population."

"Agriculture was one of the bases for the appearance of the *gorods* with a stable population. The development of handicrafts led to the creation of the *gorod posads*,"<sup>1</sup> he says, drawing a clear distinction between the *gorod* and the *posad*.

The latter part of Tikhomirov's statements is unobjectionable and requires no comment, but the first part needs some elucidation with the aid of the author's own reasoning. "The *gorods* (not the *posads*—*Author*) are concentrated where the rural population is denser."<sup>2</sup> It is true, of course, that the density of the rural population depends on the successes of agriculture.

On the other hand, the appearance of the *gorod posad* depends upon the demand for handicraft production by the rural population. "Had there been no permanent demand for handicraft production," the author writes, "the *gorod posad* could not have developed."<sup>3</sup>

I take this to mean that agriculture had only an indirect influence on the development of the *gorod posads*. The author's conclusions are important since it is only the *gorod posad* that is a *gorod* in the sense in which I use it in this chapter.

In his *Handicrafts of Ancient Rus* Rybakov reveals the history of the handicrafts as a "decisive factor in the transformation of the large settlement into the *gorod*," and sets out his views regarding the origin of *gorods* in Rus.

In his opinion, *gorods* develop either from large settlements or from boyar or princely estates. An example of the first is the Sara stronghold, and the second—the Kholm Galitsky *gorod*.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

As regards the period of their appearance in Rus, the author cites M. I. Artamonov and suggests the 8th century (for the southern forest-steppe territories). He dates the appearance of *gorods* in the middle Dnieper regions as "considerably earlier," but adds that there is no "firm ground" for such an assertion. He has only indirect evidence. "Unfortunately," the author concludes, "detailed archaeological research into the early settlements on the Middle Dnieper has just begun and has not yet yielded any tangible results."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, there is nothing to do but await the progress of these excavations.

There was another attempt to solve this problem, but it was, in my opinion, altogether unsuccessful. It was made by Smirnov,<sup>2</sup> who tried to classify ancient Rus *gorods* and date their history. He suggests three types of ancient Rus *gorods*: 1) *svoyezemcheskie*<sup>3</sup> *gorods*; 2) proprietary—*kholop gorods*; 3) "new" proprietary *gorods*. The *svoyezemchesky gorod* developed from the settlements of freemen on land which belonged to them; the *kholop gorod* sprang from the settlements of "unfree *chelyad* on unfree land, which either belonged to the lord or became his property owing to the settlement of slaves on it"; the third type was the result of a "settlement of freemen on unfree proprietary land." These are the *sloboda gorods*, the precursors of the *gorods* of the 16th and 17th centuries.

The principle of classification adopted by this historian is erroneous. He classifies his *gorods* according to two features: 1) the legal status of the land on which the *gorod* arises (land belonging or not belonging to an individual) and 2) the legal status of the *gorod* population (slaves or freemen). While the first characteristic may be used in the

<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *Handicrafts of Ancient Rus*, pp. 97-99.

<sup>2</sup> П. Смирнов, Города Московского государства в первой половине XVII в., т. I, вып. 1, Киев 1917, стр. 1-8. (P. Smirnov, *The Towns of Muscovy in the First Half of the 17th Century*, Vol. I, Issue 1, Kiev, 1917, pp. 1-8.)

<sup>3</sup> A compound of *svoi*—own, and *zem*—land.—Tr.



study of the history of the *gorods*, the second is entirely arbitrary, since there were never any *gorods* where the population consisted of slaves only.

I do not touch upon earlier opinions on the origin of *gorods* in Rus. The reader will find a more detailed account in Tikhomirov's book.

I am not at the moment concerned with the study of the ancient Rus *gorod*, a task largely performed by that author.

I wish to demonstrate that pre-Kiev Rus had attained a level of social development at which the appearance of the *gorod* as a handicraft and trade, and often administrative, centre was quite natural. I wish to show that the *gorod* originated from the Russian people's economic and social needs and thus disprove Milyukov's claim that Rus developed on lines differing from those of Western Europe. There is no denying that the *gorod* was needed by the "government," but I cannot agree with Milyukov that "the *gorod* became a necessity for the government before it was needed by the population."<sup>1</sup>

I object just as strongly to Pokrovsky's assertion that the "*gorods* of the 'great water-way'" in the times of Oleg and Igor were merely encampments of robber merchants and were more closely associated with the foreign market to which these merchants took their wares than with the surrounding country-side, in relation to which the *gorod* population was a typical parasite."<sup>2</sup>

The appearance of *gorods* among a tribe indicates that the tribal system has either entirely collapsed or is well on its way to disintegration. If the princely castle is populated by vassals only and has not yet attracted handicraftsmen and traders, and is not divorced from the village, it is not yet a *gorod*, but only a stronghold, a centre from which the feudal lord rules his seigniory.

<sup>1</sup> П. Н. Милухоз, Очерки по истории русской культуры, ч. I, СПб 1904, стр. 226. (P. N. Milyukov, *Essays on the History of Russian Culture*, Part I, St. Petersburg, 1904, p. 226.)

<sup>2</sup> М. Н. Pokrovsky, *Russian History from Earliest Times*, Vol. I, p. 81.

When a fortress is erected and manned for the defence of the state frontier it is not yet a *gorod*. It will become a *gorod* only when new life springs up within or around the fort, as was the case with Kholm, whither day after day flocked artisans and apprentices, "saddle-makers, and bow-makers, and quiver-makers, and iron and copper and silver smiths,"<sup>1</sup> when their wares become commodities.

In theory everything is clear. But it is not at all easy to solve the problem in relation to Ancient Rus on the basis of the sources.

The information in the written sources is very inadequate. Only archaeology can solve the problem. It should in justice be said that our archaeologists have done a great deal. Every year brings us new and valuable data. But what is most important is that the archaeologists have proved that they can lead history out of the present *impasse*.

Our scanty written sources appear in a different light after recent archaeological discoveries.

How often have students ignored such remarks as that in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, for example, saying that "the first settlers in Novgorod were the Slovenes, in Polotsk—the Krivichy, in Rostov—the Merya, and in Beloozero—the Ives"; or "the Duleby lived along the Bug, where the Volynyane are today."

It is absolutely clear that two periods are referred to here: one very old, and the other more recent, a period contemporary to the chronicler, or rather a period which the chronicler knew well from folk-lore.

The archaeologists give the chronicler's discourse flesh and blood, and provide a key to the actual processes which took place in Ancient Rus social life.

Even today, when they have just started to work on the problem, we are able to date the appearance of some *gorods* and partially to determine their nature.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 558.



The Ladoga excavations (1935-47), I think, present by far the most striking facts.

Ravdonikas, who was in charge of the excavations, assessed the results as "a new page in the history of Eastern Slav culture." I believe that he is absolutely right.

In the initial period of these excavations when the first underground stratum containing relics of a 9th-10th century *gorod* was uncovered, a more ancient layer, now dated to the 7th-8th centuries, was discovered.

It contained wooden houses which had a floor space ranging from 538 to 1,076 sq. ft. built of great logs measuring 33-40 ft. in length and up to 2 ft. in diameter, with the stove occupying the central position in the house. The importance of this discovery becomes evident when we compare them with the 9th-10th century houses which as a rule had a floor space ranging from 12.4 by 12.8 ft. up to 18 by 19.7 ft. (the average length of a square building is 14.8-16.4 ft.)

Such a difference in the floor area of dwelling-houses dating to the period between the 7th and the 10th centuries must, of course, have its causes.

It is clear that only a small family of 5-6 persons could have lived in a house of from 161.4 to 323 sq. ft.; under similar conditions, 20 or more persons could be accommodated in a building with 1,076 sq. ft. of floor space. Obviously, we are here dealing with the so-called "big family," whose members are listed in Art. 1 of the earliest part of the *Brief Russkaya Pravda*. ("If a man kills another, the brother revenges his brother, or the son the father, or the father the son, or the son of his brother, or the son of his sister."<sup>1</sup> This family led a group life which is indicated by a single stove, the hearth, a source of warmth for the whole family which, it appears, also cooked its food there.

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<sup>1</sup> We find the same members of the big family among the Horvatians: "Sons, brothers, sons of brothers, sons of sisters, sons of sons, near and far relatives." (V. V. Jagić, *The Vinodol Law*, p. 45.)

The large dimensions of the outhouses also indicate the collective nature of the family's holding. The cattle-yard—the pen (called the *zaboi* in the *Russkaya Pravda*) surrounded by a fence, occupies an area of 645.6 sq. ft., which shows that dozens of cattle could be kept there. It is remarkable that the stalls are divided into sections in which either the younger animals, or different kinds of animals were kept: the horse, the mare, the cow, three-year-olds, two-year-olds, one-year-olds, young ewes, rams. (Cf. Art. 28 of the *Brief Russkaya Pravda*, and the more comprehensive list in Art. 45 of the *Extensive Russkaya Pravda*.)

Barns with a floor area of 269-323 sq. ft. indicate the amount of stores kept there.

Cereals occupy first place. Millet is most conspicuous while barley is also to be found. It will be remembered that an iron *sokha* point was found in this 7th-century layer which testifies to the existence of plough farming in the region of Ladoga.

Occasionally hemp and flax are found, mostly in the form of locally manufactured articles. Wooden scutches and parts of a loom were also discovered.

There are traces not only of draught animals, but of meat and milk cattle as well. Wooden churn staffs were discovered.

Farming is combined with domestic handicrafts (hand moulding, wooden carvings, bone engravings, weaving, etc.).

All this points to the usual peasant economy. We may get the impression that we have discovered a village rather than a settlement of the urban type.

But there are other facts which clearly indicate that we are dealing with a *gorod*, rather than a village. It is, of course, a *gorod* which has not yet become entirely detached from the village way of life: there are obvious signs of handicrafts and trade.



Crucibles and mouldings were discovered. One of the mouldings is very remarkable: it is two-sided and is made of lithographic stone for casting pendants of the 7th-century type found in the Kiev area. Materials for metal and jewellery work, such as crude metal, gold wire, copper bars, have also been discovered.

All these are unquestionable indications of handicrafts. Finished articles are also well represented: gold articles, chains, temple rings of the Krivichy type and articles made of amber.

There is evidence of the sale of finished articles by the Ladogan handicraftsmen. The discoveries of Eastern 6th-7th century coins also speak of the existence of trade.

Only an insignificant section of Ladoga has as yet been explored, and it is not at the centre of the settlement but on the fringe.

It can be safely said that with the progress of the excavations in the 7th-century Ladoga layer and with the increase in the volume of material there will be growing proof of Ravdonikas's conclusion that it is a settlement of the *gorod* type or at least, as the author carefully words it, a "settlement which is turning into a *gorod*" at that early date.

There is another important aspect of his observations. He is vigorously opposed to the idea of Ladoga being a Varangian settlement, as the Normanists asserted. He holds that it is a Slav settlement, a Krivichy settlement, to be precise. This contention is supported by the following line of argument: in the first place, there is similarity between its ceramics and those of the Upper Dnieper area, while its temple rings and wooden buildings are of the Krivichy type; secondly, the 7th century is much too early a date for the Varangians, who appeared in Europe some two centuries later.<sup>1</sup> By the 10th century, Ladoga was a sizable *gorod* with laid-out streets and sufficiently

<sup>1</sup> *Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1949, Issue XI, pp. 5-54.

developed handicrafts and trade. Three hundred years of Ladoga life had not passed in vain.

Ladoga is not the only *gorod* of that period. Kiev, no doubt, must have been in a somewhat similar state. Archaeological research proves that as a *gorod*, and not as a settlement, Kiev should be dated to the 8th century. Traces of three Slav settlements dating to the 8th-9th centuries were found on its territory. One of them occupied a hill overlooking the Dnieper. Its northern part was defended by a bank and a moat beyond which lay the mounds of a heathen burial-ground.<sup>1</sup>

The handicraft workshops discovered in 10th century Kiev are noteworthy. It was undoubtedly a large centre of handicrafts by that time. Khvoika discovered a workshop for the manufacture of glass bracelets with pieces of glass, crucibles, pieces of bracelets, spoiled in the process of manufacture, and other unquestionable signs of local production.<sup>2</sup>

Recent excavations in Kiev and Kiselevka show that Kiev *gorod* has a long prehistory deeply rooted in the Tripolye period.<sup>3</sup>

It is not clear what went on in Kiev in the period of transition from an agricultural settlement to a *gorod*, but archaeologists are convinced that this evolution did take place, and that by the 8th century we are entitled to speak of Kiev as a *gorod*. In any case, the Arab geographer Jaihani called Kuyava a town, obviously similar to those of Central Asia.

Artsikhovsky notes the considerable quantities of coins found in the Kiev excavations: Arabian before the 11th century, and from then on German, English and Russian.

<sup>1</sup> Н. Н. Воронин, Древнерусские города, М.—Л. 1945, стр. 15. (N. N. Voronin, *Ancient Rus Gorods*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945, p. 15.)

<sup>2</sup> А. В. Арциховский, Введение в археологию, М. 1947, стр. 178. (A. V. Artsikhovsky, *Introduction to Archaeology*, Moscow, 1947, p. 178.)

<sup>3</sup> *Arkheologia*, published by the Institute of Archaeology of the Ukrainian Academy of Science, Kiev, 1947, Vol. I.



"There is a consistent but unintelligible law underlying this supersession of eastern coins by the western and the western by bars."<sup>1</sup>

I do not take it upon myself to solve the problem in its entirety, but venture to set forth my considerations. The great number of eastern 7th-10th century coins on the territory of the U.S.S.R. illustrates the well-known fact, unfortunately often forgotten in broader generalizations, viz., that a lively trade was being carried on between the East and pre-Kiev Rus, and that this trade was not barter trade but trade involving money. The cessation of the flow of Eastern coins and the flood of western coins was due to the "silver crisis" in Central Asia which occurred in the second half of the 10th century, as well as the development of ties between Rus and the West-European countries. At this time, a coin of Rus origin made its appearance, but as the archaeologists correctly point out, it was in circulation for a brief period only. This fact can be explained, I think, by the feudal dismemberment of Ancient Rus into a group of comparatively small principalities unable to mint their own coins which were scarcely necessary: silver bars, which could easily be divided into parts of smaller weight, were a very convenient and universal means of trade over the whole of Rus in spite of her political atomization.

Even if my assumptions require correction, we cannot ignore the absolutely authentic fact of early Rus trade with the East in studying the origin of the Rus *gorods*. It must have led to the appearance in Rus of places for storing and exchanging wares. (It is highly improbable that Eastern merchants personally scoured our vast country in search of commodities.) Such market-places must have naturally arisen in the more populated localities along well-known routes.

Kiev was unquestionably one of them. Kuyava *gorod* was well known to Eastern merchants. Arabian geographers

<sup>1</sup> A. V. Artsikhovskiy, op. cit., p. 180.

knew it well and stressed that Kuyava traded with other peoples and willingly received foreign merchants, including, of course, those from the East. This is a report by Jaihani, who wrote in the early 10th century, but used earlier sources. In any case, this report dates to the period before the formation of the state of Ancient Rus, since it is described as consisting of three states (Kuyavia, Slavia and Artania).

Smolensk, undoubtedly, was also an ancient *gorod*. We have no facts as yet to determine the precise period of its appearance. The Tver chronicler's report for 865 that Smolensk was "very strong and numerously populated" in the 9th century, while Askold and Dir found Kiev a "small *gorod*" requires verification. Nevertheless, the Smolensk of the heathen period is known as a *gorod* which had given rise to the *greatest* burial mound group in the world (about 3,000). Excavations reveal that it had a population of soldiers, traders and handicraftsmen in the 10th century. At the moment we can judge of its earlier period only by scattered hints. Early 10th-century Arabian and Central Asiatic dirhems are an indication of trade between Smolensk and the East. An abundance of iron articles and pottery testifies to their large-scale production, which did not spring up overnight. But no implements of production have as yet been discovered in these barrows.<sup>1</sup>

It is too early to draw conclusions regarding the origin and nature of ancient Smolensk because its site has not yet been located.

Lyavdansky's excavations of Polotsk give us sufficient ground to speak of a settlement of the *gorod* type of the 8th and 9th centuries. His investigations of ancient Vitebsk date it approximately to the same period.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Artsikhovsky, op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> *Zapiski addzelu humanitarnykh nauk*, book 2; *Pratsi Arkheologichnai Komisii*, Vol. II, pp. 172-73; *Arkheologicheskie Issledovania v RSFSR, 1934-36*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1941, pp. 93-94.



The same must be said of Pskov. Archaeologists date its origin approximately to the 8th century.<sup>1</sup>

All this shows that *gorods* began to appear in Rus before the 9th century. But we should like to know just what these ancient settlements of the urban type were.

I accept Tikhomirov's reproach that, having noted the existence of *gorods* in Rus prior to the 9th century, I "failed to give the slightest description of these *gorods* which, it is true, existed long before the advent of the Varangians." I must admit that I am still unable to give that "description." The explanation will doubtlessly be given by archaeological material which is still insufficient today.

The latest excavations of Ladoga by Ravdonikas reveal to some extent the nature of this 7th-8th century *gorod*. But it will be remembered that the territory of the *gorod* has not as yet been fully explored and we should be careful in our deductions.

The following can be safely asserted:

1. *Gorods* began to appear in Rus, as elsewhere in class society, only between the 7th and the 11th centuries, which is natural considering the diversified conditions and state of social development in the various parts of such a vast territory. (Tribal relations endured until the 10-11th centuries in some of the less developed areas occupied by the Vyatichy).

2. In the more advanced parts of Rus, *gorods* sprang up between the 7th and 8th centuries.

3. Regardless of the diversified types of settlement from which the *gorod* emerges, it is invariably a settlement divorced from the village and opposed to it, being organized on "property based on labour, and exchange," i.e. on handicraft production and trade.

4. The earliest strata of the Ladoga of the 7th and 8th centuries reveal the character of the ancient Rus *gorod*, not entirely separated from agriculture, with its large

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<sup>1</sup> *Arkheologicheskie Issledovania v RSFSR, 1934-36*, pp. 28-32.

family, but with signs of production not only to order, but for general sale as well.

5. There is ground for the assertion that the other 9th-century *gorods*, which had obviously appeared earlier, resembled that of Ladoga.

Far from contradicting our conceptions (of necessity vague) of the origin and nature of the earliest Rus *gorods*, our knowledge of the state of pre-Kiev society lends them logical and factual support.

### 3. GENERAL REMARKS

Our conceptions of the social system which preceded feudalism among the peoples of our country, and above all among the Dnieper and Volkhov Slavs, are predetermined to some extent by the above-mentioned facts. The mark or *obshchina* unquestionably arises on the ruins of the patriarchal tribe, and often exists side by side with the large patriarchal family whose evolution we have traced. This was by no means a peaceful process, and the chronicle hints at the struggle between the passing and the nascent systems.

In this vast process the structure and character of the initial period of class society and the role of slavery should first be examined.

However, this major controversial problem cannot be solved in relation to a particular society, in this case Eastern Slav society, without recourse to the records and a consideration of the place occupied by that society in the historical process.

At the moment of their appearance the Slavs, and their Eastern branch in particular, during the disintegration of their primitive communal system encountered a decaying slave-holding society. They were among the group of peoples who were able to rejuvenate moribund Europe with the aid of their community system. The new peoples pos-



sessed the potentialities of a more progressive system, the feudal system. This does not mean that these so-called "barbarians" knew no slavery. Slavery, as the simplest form of the division of labour and the initial form of the class division of society, was of course well known to these peoples, including the Slavs.

Even a most cursory examination of our archaeological and written material shows the important part played by slavery among the Slavs.

The existence of slaves among the Slavs is often mentioned by the earliest Byzantine authors and later Arab accounts. These accounts, by the way, describe a custom, widespread among the Slavs, of cremating the wives of deceased nobles with the women ostensibly choosing death of their own free will. This is reported by Mauricius in his *Strategia*, and retold by Leo the Wise (886-911) in his *Tactics*. The same is told by Bishop of Mainz Bonifacius (755) of the Western Slavs. The Arab Al-Jaihani reports similar practices in Rus, but he adds that it was slaves who were cremated with the deceased. This is corroborated by Ibn Fadlan, Al-Istahri and others. Archaeological investigations of graves bear this out. This custom was practised only by the rich and the noble. This is unquestionably a result of the prolonged existence of slavery, since such practice is not met with in the tribal classless society. Ibn Haukal and Al-Istahri, quoting the same source, report that girls were cremated for the "beatitude of their souls,"<sup>1</sup> since they could enter the Kingdom of Heaven only with their masters.

But Mauricius also points out the difference in the status of Slav and Byzantine slaves. I stress that Mauricius speaks not of Slav slaves in general but of captives only, who were invariably turned into slaves in ancient societies. That is what struck the Byzantian observer and sur-

<sup>1</sup> А. Я. Гаркави, Сказания мусульманских писателей о славянах и русских, СПб 1870, стр. 193 и 221. (A. Y. Garkavi, *Stories of Moslem Writers about the Slavs and Russians*, St. Petersburg, 1870, pp. 193 and 221.)

prised him. Mauricius has possibly exaggerated but he could not have distorted the fact altogether. It is borne out by a later story of a Polovets (*The Miracle of St. Nicholas*) who was captured by the Russians. There are no indications that he worked in captivity. Why he was imprisoned is unknown. His owner offered to release him for a ransom, but since the captive had no means at his disposal the owner accepted St. Nikolas's bail for him and let him go to fetch the ransom. This story indicates that slavery among the Slavs did not alter perceptibly even much later, and if it did change, it was never in the direction of the labour slavery of antiquity. Nor is captivity mentioned as a source of slavery in *Russkaya Pravda*.

All ancient Russian written sources speak of slaves. Nor could it be otherwise, since slavery existed both in the "pre-Kiev period" and in the "Kiev period" as well.

References to the slaves are to be found in practically every written source which has been preserved from the 10th to the 12th centuries and later. They are known under various names, such as *kholop*, *chelyad*, *oderen*, *obel*, slave or simply *lyudi*, usually with the name of the owner. Slaves are bought, sold, exploited in various ways and stolen; sometimes they run away from their owners and are then caught and punished. There is much evidence on this score, but their social role in Ancient Rus is not yet clear. Neither will it become clear by the examination of the economic status of the slave in a static condition, because knowledge is gained by the study of natural processes in their self-motion, in the disclosure of their contradictory, mutually exclusive, opposing trends. It is only the history of society that will show the part the slave played in the production of that society at a given stage of its development.

No matter how we date the appearance of class society among the Eastern Slavs—and it cannot be the same for the whole great mass of the Eastern Slavs—one thing,



however, is clear: slavery did not become the basis of production.

The village community—a fragment of the tribal system with its free agricultural population—continued to live, and its members, constituting the bulk of the population, were the main productive force in Eastern Slav society undergoing feudalization. The feudal lord rejected the slave as a totally inefficient worker, and preferred to deal with the peasant whom he held in fee. The *obshchina*, which served as a bulwark for the peasants, did not allow the slave to oust the peasant as the basis of production in Rus, as was the case in the Roman slave-holding latifundium which, as Pliny the Elder put it, ruined the Roman peasant and Italy with him (*"Latifundia perdidere Italiam nunc vero et provincias"*), and created such unbearable conditions for the masses of the Roman Empire that they eventually openly strove to join the "barbarians" with their more primitive, but more equitable system which provided a tolerable existence.

\* \* \*

In the period under examination the process of feudalization did not advance uniformly over the entire vast territory of Ancient Rus, for it was definitely more intensive along the Dnieper and the Volkhov than in the areas lying in between. I think it is permissible to make a general study of this process only in the main centres of that part of Europe occupied by the Eastern Slavs, constantly bearing in mind the diversified natural, ethnical and historical conditions prevailing in each of the large parts of this unit.

I consider it my duty to warn the reader that owing to the paucity of the written sources, I shall confine myself mostly to the period from the 10th to the 12th centuries and examine those centres which were located along the great water-way from the Baltic to the Caspian Sea. My investigations are based on Russian sources and supplemented in a few cases by non-Russian records.

It is also expedient to agree on the precise meaning of the main concepts to be used here: namely, the slave system, and feudalism.

Slave-holders and slaves constitute the first major division of society into classes, but not everywhere did slavery attain its highest stage of development, since not all societies passed through a slave-holding structure, just as there are societies which did not pass through feudalism and capitalism. Mankind knows the slave-holding period in its so-called ancient history. There are no slave-holding states in the Middle Ages. The history of every people unfolds against the background of its own historical surroundings, which cannot but have an influence on the development of that people's productive forces.

In their progress from the tribal system to feudalism the Slavs, the Germans and other mediaeval peoples bypassed the slave system, although each knew slavery perfectly well as one of the forms of exploitation.

Under the slave system, the basis of the relations of production is the slave-holder's ownership of the means of production and of the producer himself, the slave.

For slave labour to replace the labour of the free peasant, a member of the *obshchina*, and actually to become the "basis of production," conditions were required which were lacking in mediaeval Europe. Therefore we do not find slave-holding states in Europe after approximately the 5th century A.D.

The reproduction of the labour force in the slave-holding society depended upon the manner in which slaves were exploited and used in production. The possibility of constant internal reproduction of the slave labour force under the usual system of slave exploitation was almost out of the question. Slavery as a system could not be maintained by internal resources alone and this led to the policy of conquests pursued by all ancient societies, when the slave market was supplied by wars, piracy, etc. Military



undertakings were usually aimed at turning the vanquished into slaves.

It is evident, therefore, that the slave system could triumph only in special historical circumstances, which did not necessarily exist everywhere at a given historical period. Thus, we see feudalism prevailing in Europe from the 8th to the 15th centuries. Slavery continued to exist within it, but showing an increasing tendency to disappear.

It is obvious that this or that social system does not take shape overnight and that substantial transition periods are inevitable.

At the moment, we should like to know how the feudal system took shape among the Eastern Slavs, because they, like other mediaeval peoples, did not pass from the primitive tribal system to feudalism straightaway.

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The scholar should bear in mind that every social and economic structure has its own mode of production. That is why we should above all have a clear idea of the essence of feudalism. We shall find this neither among the historians of the nobility nor of the bourgeoisie. All either denied the existence of feudalism in Russia, or held it to be a certain system of statutory relations. In the latter view, the inception of feudalism in Rus was connected with the appearance of political atomization.

The essence of feudal relations was revealed only in the works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism who set out the theory of social and economic structures. A classical definition of the feudal system was given by Stalin. The basis of the relations of production under the feudal system is that the feudal lord owns the means of production and does not fully own the worker in production—the serf whom the feudal lord can no longer kill, but whom he can buy and sell. Alongside feudal ownership there exists the

individual ownership by the peasant and the handicraftsman of his implements of production and his private enterprise based on his personal labour.

It is obvious that one of the salient problems in the study of the origins of feudalism in Rus is the problem of feudal land tenure, the problem of large landholdings among the Eastern Slavs.

New archaeological data and written evidence (Arab, Byzantian and Russian) lead us to assume in the light of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the basis and superstructure that it was in the period between the 6th and the 8th centuries that feudal relations took shape and feudal property arose among the Eastern Slavs.

This period can be called the "semi-patriarchal-semi-feudal" period. In fact it was a period when feudal relations were taking shape within the disintegrating patriarchal community system of the Eastern Slavs, when large landholdings began to appear and there was increasing exploitation of the peasant members of the *obshchina* by the landowners. This is a period when the first political units appear among the Eastern Slavs.

Archaeological facts prove that a developed tribal system was prevalent among the Slavs approximately until the 5th century A. D. although signs of its decay were evident even then. Excavations of the "burial fields" (of the Polyane, Severyane, Volynyane, Ulich, Buzhane, White Horvatians, etc.) enabled Rybakov not only to determine the main occupation of the Slavs of that period (field cultivation and settled animal husbandry), but also to discover some features of their social system: the Slavs continued to live in large fortified settlements. Such a fortified tribal settlement was discovered by Tretyakov farther north, in Berezniki.

Later settlements are of a different type: they are not fortified, but side by side with unfortified villages one finds fortified manor-houses which obviously belonged to rich and politically influential people.



The co-existence of unfortified peasant settlements and the fortified manor-houses of the nobility which the archaeologists trace back to the 7th century is an unquestionable indication of the substantial changes in the social development of the Eastern Slavs.

Land tenure necessarily became the main type of ownership of the means of production in an agricultural country. The formation of classes among the Slavs proceeded on that basis, and the owner of the fortified manor-house was beyond doubt also an owner of land with *smern*-peasants living on it. The lord well realized the enmity of the village population he held in fee, and this made him build special fortifications around his home. Such is the social nature of this fortified manorial estate, in the immediate neighbourhood of the usual, unfortified village settlement.

Other excavations indicate an intensive formation of classes among the Eastern Slavs in the 6th and 8th centuries. Rybakov's observations of the seals of princely and boyar property in the 10th and 12th centuries are of particular importance.<sup>1</sup> Rybakov is of the opinion that elements of such seals are to be found among the nobility beginning from the 6th and 7th centuries. This sheds light on the fragmentary evidence of Byzantine, Arab and other records. All the reports of the activities of Bozh, the chieftain of the Antes, and the 70 elders in the 4th century, the social and political system of the Slavs in the 6th century, their religious ideas, and their successful struggle against Byzantium become highly significant in the light of the discoveries of Soviet archaeologists.

Byzantine sources tell us of the progressive role played by the Slav peoples in transforming the slave-holding Eastern Roman Empire into a feudal state.

Arab sources help clarify our concepts of the social and

<sup>1</sup> Б. А. Рыбаков, Знаки собственности в княжеском хозяйстве Киевской Руси X—XII вв. („Советская археология“, № 6, М.—Л. 1940, стр. 227—257. (B.A. Rybakov, *Property Insignia in the Princely Economy of Kiev Rus of the 10th to the 12th Centuries*, *Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, No. 6, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, pp. 227-257.)

political life of the Eastern Slavs of the time. Masudis' account (9th century) of the existence of a political union of the Slavs in 6th-century Volyn is confirmed by the Russian chronicle. It was approximately in the 8th century, according to the testimony of other Arab authors, that several state unions appeared, known as Kuyavia, Slavia and Artania. They were much more mature and stable than that in 6th-century Volyn, and were the immediate precursors of the vast state of Ancient Rus with its centre at Kiev. The existence of these political unions is proved by the indirect evidence provided by an ancient Arab map of Eastern Europe. Other political unions may have possibly originated in Eastern Europe between the 6th and the 8th centuries, but at the moment their existence can only be assumed.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* appears to support such an assumption by its reports of special principalities among the Polyane (where Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv "held rule" and their descendants after them), as well as by its mention of similar principalities in other East Slav lands ("principalities... the Drevlyane had their own and the Dregovichy their own, and the Slovenes their own in Novgorod"<sup>1</sup>). This legend undoubtedly contains elements of real historical fact.

These political units helped to strengthen the economic and political position of the landholding nobility.

Thus, the study of archaeological and written records (Byzantine, Arab, etc.) and their correct interpretation leads us to conclude that some of the evidence of comparatively later Russian sources (the *Russkaya Pravda*, the chronicle containing the treaties with the Greeks, etc.) is applicable not only to the 10th and 12th centuries, but also to a much earlier period. We know that the Russian people had traversed a long road of development before the records appeared, and that its successes along this road

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<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 13.



were substantial and should not only serve as a source for the study of Rus society of the 10th and 12th centuries, but should also be used to analyse earlier periods of ancient Rus history. The *Russkaya Pravda*, particularly its earliest section, is of paramount importance in the study of the emergence of a class, feudal society.

The articles describing the social status of the *muzhi* in Ancient Rus society are of particular interest. The earliest *Pravda* centres its attention on these *muzhi*. They lived in *khoromy* surrounded by servants; they did not sever their ties with the peasant *mir*. These *khoromy* can be compared with the fortified dwellings which have been excavated. The *muzhi* were armed and often resorted to arms. They owned property which could be bought and sold. They were capable of paying for maltreatment, injuries, and personal offences. And it is they who appeared to be the land-owners.

The treaties with the Greeks are of no less importance in this study than the *Russkaya Pravda*. Although the first treaties which have been preserved date to the beginning of the 10th century, there are grounds for assuming that such treaties were also drawn up in the 9th century.





V. SOCIAL RELATIONS  
IN KIEV RUS





In describing the social relations of "pre-Kiev" Rus we have had recourse to archaeological material as well as written sources of non-Russian origin, and have used Russian written sources only to trace the remote past. The society of the "Kiev period," on the other hand, can be studied with the aid of written sources produced by Ancient Rus herself. Our conclusions become more precise and comprehensive.

It should be borne in mind that the written material does not take us back to the initial period of the society we are studying, but presents social phenomena which have a lengthy history of their own. The earliest memorial, the *Russkaya Pravda*, of which an 11th-century copy has been preserved, bears traces of great antiquity.

As has been said, the *muzhi* or knights, to whom so much attention is paid by the earliest *Pravda*, were always armed and often resorted to arms even in their relations with each other, and were at the same time capable of paying for injuries, wounds and personal insults; they possessed property which could be bought and sold. In the same *Pravda* we find the *chelyad* they held in fee. These *chelyad* consisted not only of slaves. This *Pravda* is of great antiquity but contains no sign of the tribal system. The only reminder of it is the feud, which, however, has ceased to be a blood feud and was obviously passing away. It could be waived. Its alternative in the form of wergild had made its appearance, and ousted it entirely in the mid-11th century.

These are conclusions based on what the *Pravda* tells us. But we should also bear in mind its silences which can often be made good by an interpretation of the chronicle in general and the treaties with the Greeks, in particular.

## 1. LARGE LANDHOLDINGS AND LANDOWNERS

Two earliest written sources—the treaties with the Greeks and the *Russkaya Pravda*—help us to examine the latifundia of Kiev and in part those of pre-Kiev Rus.

The treaties with the Greeks are a very important source enabling the student to probe the secrets of 9th and early 10th century Rus. Their appearance shows that relations between the two states were important, while the details, even if scanty, give us a clear picture of Rus's direct relations with Byzantium.

More or less regular trade had been carried on by Byzantium for a long time with a southern people whom the Greeks call either *εῤῥῶς*, or Scythians, or yet Tauro-Scythians. But trade was not the Greeks' only form of contact with this people. *εῤῥῶς*

Vasilyevsky's brilliant papers on the Greek biographies of Georgy of Amastrida and Stephan of Surozh have proved conclusively that the Greeks were very familiar with southern Rus. *εῤῥῶς* Vasilyevsky dated the Rus invasion of Amastrida to the early forties of the 9th century. "At this time the name of Rus," he writes, "was not only known, but was widely in use, at least on the southern shore of the Black Sea."<sup>1</sup>

He writes of Rus trade with the Greeks: "Accounts of the trade of Rus merchants with Byzantium across the Black Sea, and with the Moslem countries across the Caspian date to the forties of the 9th century; naturally, trade itself began a few decades earlier. Rus was known

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. В. Г. Васильевский, Труды, т. III, П. 1915, стр. CX. (V. G. Vasilyevsky, Works, Vol. III, Petrograd, 1915, p. CX.)



to Byzantium and the Arabs in the first half of that century."<sup>1</sup>

Vasilyevsky is convinced that the term Rus is invariably applied to the Tauro-Scythians, but he cannot definitely tell who these Tauro-Scythians are. Recalling the Gothic theory of the origin of Rus, but not insisting on it, Vasilyevsky notes that this theory "considering the current state of the problem could be more acceptable in many respects than the Norman-Scandinavian theory." Thus, in rejecting the Scandinavian theory, Vasilyevsky only wished to determine which of the three centres of Tauro-Scythian Rus, the Taurian, the Dnieper, or the Tmutarakan, could have invaded Amastrida and Surozh.<sup>2</sup>

What I am concerned with, however, is to indicate the early intercourse between the Greeks and Rus, known to them under this popular, local name (the literary name was Tauro-Scythians). In fact, the Greeks had known this people for a long time, but began to pay them special attention when they matured economically and politically and attacked the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire on June 18, 860. Two speeches were pronounced and a Regional Message was circulated by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople in connection with this attack. In one of his sermons Photius declares: "These barbarians are justified in their frenzy on account of the killings of their fellow tribesmen and had grounds ( εὐλόγως ) to demand and expect a retribution equal to the atrocity."<sup>3</sup> And further on: "They were led here by their wrath."<sup>4</sup>

In his *Regional Message* a few years later (866), Photius told what he knew of this people: "It is a people often mentioned and lauded by many, surpassing all other peoples by its ferocity and bloodthirstiness.... I speak of

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. CXXIII.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. CCLXXXII-CCLXXXIII.

<sup>3</sup> Порфирий Успенский, Четыре беседы Фотия, СПб 1864, стр. 17. (Porphyry Uspensky, *Four Sermons by Photius*, St. Petersburg, 1864, p. 17.)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

the Rus who, having conquered the surrounding peoples, had become proud, and having a high opinion of itself, has taken up arms against the Roman state."<sup>1</sup>

This occurred some 40 years prior to the first agreement between Rus and the Greeks which has been preserved. The Treaty of 911 states that Rus had had long-standing relations with the Greeks: the Rus envoys arrived in Constantinople to sign an agreement "to maintain and proclaim the love between the Christians and Rus which had lasted many years."

The biography of the Byzantine Emperor Basilus and the message of Patriarch Photius prompt Priselkov to refer to a treaty of alliance and friendship between Rus and the Greeks, dated 866-867, which has not been preserved, and which the Rus consolidated by accepting Christianity and a Bishop from Byzantium. Pogodin and Platonov also acknowledge the existence of a treaty preceding that of 907-911. There is good reason for such an assumption. The 911 Treaty, it will be recalled, says that Rus had long-standing relations with the Greeks: the Rus envoys had arrived in Constantinople to conclude an agreement with the Greeks "to maintain and proclaim the *love between the Christians and Rus, which had lasted for many years.*"<sup>2</sup> The Rus cannot be regarded as Varangians. Rus swears to the agreement in the purely Slav and not in the German manner: "King Leon with Alexander made peace with Oleg and agreed to pay tribute, and they took the oath among themselves by kissing the cross, but led Oleg and his men-at-arms to the oath, according to Rus law: they swore by their arms, and by Peroun, their god, and Volos, the cattle god (i.e., by the Slavonic gods—*Author*) and established peace" (the 907 Treaty).<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, they

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<sup>1</sup> Д. Иловайский, Разыскания о начале Руси, М. 1876, стр. 198. (D. Ilovaisky, *Investigations into the Origin of Rus*, Moscow, 1876, p. 198.)

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, p. 32; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31 and p. 25.



swore by their arms not in the German manner, but taking their weapons off and putting them at the feet of the idol, in accordance with their own custom. In a similar ritual the Germans used to plunge their swords into the ground.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the treaty was signed by the Rus state and not by some ethnic or social group, a fact of cardinal importance.

The conclusion of the treaties points to the existence of a class society. It was not the mass of the *obshchina* peasantry who needed the treaties, but the princes, boyars and merchants.

It is not surprising, therefore, that there are indications of the existence of a class society and a state in that part of the treaty which is included in the chronicle for 907 (if it is not a special treaty). "Oleg ordered that 12 *grivnas* be given per rowlock in the 2,000 vessels and then the established payments be made for Rus *gorods*: firstly, for Kiev, then for Chernigov, for Pereyaslavl, for Polotsk, for Rostov, for Lubech and other *gorods*, because the grand princes, who were under Oleg, sat in these *gorods*."

There is a substantial supplement to this text in the 911 Treaty. The representatives of Rus, this treaty said, were sent "from Oleg, the Rus Grand Prince, and from all the eminent boyars under him, at the desire and behest of our great princes . . . on behalf of all Rus who are under him." Before quoting the treaty, the chronicle says that Oleg sent his "*muzhi* to conclude peace and draw up a treaty between Rus and the Greeks." There is a similar introduction to the 944 Treaty: "Igor sent his *muzhi* to Roman, and Roman called together his boyars and dignitaries; and invited the Rus envoys and ordered them to speak and their speeches to be recorded in a charter."<sup>2</sup>

The 944 Treaty adds a few more facts. This time, it appears, the Russian envoys and merchants were dis-

<sup>1</sup> N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, p. 445.

<sup>2</sup> *Lawrenty Annals* and *Ipaty Annals* for 907, 913, 945; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 24, 26, 34.

patched "from Igor, the Rus Grand Prince, and from all the princes and all the people of the Rus land." "And our Grand Prince Igor and his boyars and all the Russian people sent us to Roman . . . to make friendship with the king himself, with all his boyars and all the Greek people for all times, while the sun shines and the world stands. . . ." "And let the Rus Grand Prince and the boyars send ships to the Greek land to the Great Greek King as many as they desire, with envoys and merchants. . . ." And further on we read: "And the envoys bore seals of gold and the merchants of silver." According to the treaty the merchants are entitled to receive from the Greeks a "monthly allowance" and the envoys a "bread allowance" with the hierarchy maintained according to the size of the *gorod*: Kiev, then Chernigov, then Pereyaslavl, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Somewhat later the best and noblest *muzhi* are mentioned in the Drevlyane embassy to Olga: "And the Drevlyane sent to Olga their best *muzhi*, numbering twenty, in a boat"; and for another embassy "the Drevlyane chose their best *muzhi*, who ruled the land of the Drevlyane and sent them after her." Olga tells the Drevlyane: "send me noble *muzhi*."<sup>2</sup>

Who are these eminent princes, boyars and best people? They are not tribal elders, because the tribe as such is not to be found in the treaties with the Greeks, with the exception, possibly, of scattered hints about its survivals.

The treaties with the Greeks tell of private property which its owner is free to dispose of as he sees fit, including the right to bequeath it: the owner is free to "dispose of his estate" and this is fully supported by the *Russkaya Pravda*. The 911 Treaty (Art. 5) refers to the "Rus law" which formed part of *Russkaya Pravda*: "And whosoever hits another with a sword or any kind of vessel shall pay five litres of silver according to the *Rus law*." (Cf.

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 945; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 35, 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* for 945, and p. 41.



*Russkaya Pravda*, Academic Copy, Art. 3.) In the "Rus law," as well as in the *Russkaya Pravda*, the term Rus—*rosskiy*—has nothing to do with the Normans. It is an inscription of a purely Slav law.

The highly interesting archaeological studies of settlements also indicate the large-scale changes in the social system. Archaeologists point out that the type of small fortified settlements, the *gorodishche* (places of settlement of a tribe or a small family), disappears in the 7th and 8th centuries in the north forest zone (in the south similar processes took place earlier). They are replaced by unfortified settlements and villages. Side by side with them there appears what may be called the bailey or castle. This combination<sup>1</sup> is highly characteristic of the period in which there are already many *gorods*.

All this proves that the Eastern Slavs lived in a class society as early as the 7th and 8th centuries, and that the Ancient Rus state was the result of the extensive earlier development of the Eastern Slavs. It becomes clear why they had several political unions prior to the state of Ancient Rus: the 9th and 10th centuries are far from being the initial period in the history of Rus.

The eminent princes and boyars, whom the chronicler styles "the best," "noble" *muzhi*, are not tribal elders, but representatives of the upper class of Ancient Rus society. By that time tribal elders could hardly have been found even among the Drevlyane.

The part of the 944 Treaty quoted above shows that the envoys had certain advantages over the merchants: the envoys had seals of gold, and the merchants of silver. The envoys received a special "bread allowance," and the merchants a "monthly allowance."

There is no difficulty in deciphering the term "*gost*" used in the treaty, which means merchant. But who are these envoys who stand above the merchants? They are

<sup>1</sup> P. N. Tretyakov, *Concerning the History of the Upper Volga Tribes in the First Millennium A. D.*, Moscow, 1941.

unquestionably boyars, who together with the *best muzhi* stood out among the mass due to their wealth and their resultant authority and power.

Our ancient boyars can be divided into two groups. These are the most opulent people often styled "the best, the noble, the elders." They are a product of the social evolution of every locality, the native nobility, as well as the dignitaries of the princely court, some of whom are of foreign origin. The chronicles often differentiate between the "boyars" and the "elders." The "elders" are the so-called boyars of the *zemstvo*, the "*senatores terrae*," and the chronicler translates this Latin expression as "the elders and the inhabitants of the land." ("*Nobilis in portis vir ejus, quando sederit cum senatoribus terrae.*") Following the return of his envoys who were sent to examine the various religions, Vladimir convened his "boyars and elders." "It is not to be doubted," writes Vladimirsky-Budanov, "that from time immemorial the Eastern Slavs had among them (apart from the prince's nobles who came from abroad) a similar class of best people, who are called *majores natu, seniores, kmety*, etc., among the Western Slavs."<sup>1</sup> These boyars of the *zemstvo* differ from the prince's boyars. Vladimir invited to feast with him "his own boyars, *posadniks* and elders from all the *gorods*,"<sup>2</sup> and he feasted the "boyars, *grids*, centurions, decurions and noble *muzhi*" in his Kiev palace.

The existence of these boyars of the *zemstvo* is particularly evident in Novgorod. In 1015, when the Novgorodites massacred the Varangian men-at-arms, Prince Yaroslav revenged himself by killing their "noble *muzhi*"<sup>3</sup> who were organized in millenaries, i.e., the Novgorod, and not the Varangian, military organization. In 1018, following his defeat at the hands of Boleslav of Poland and Svyato-

<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 996; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> *First Novgorod Annals* for 1015-1016; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, pp. 168-79.



polk, Yaroslav came to Novgorod and wanted to escape abroad, but the Novgorodites would not let him go, declaring that they were ready to fight against Boleslav and Svyatopolk and "began to collect money: 4 *kunas* per *muzh*, 10 *grivnas* per *starosta* and 18 *grivnas* per boyar." It is perfectly obvious that the Novgorod *veche* imposed this duty, not on the Prince's *druzhinniks*, of whom Yaroslav at the time had none, having fled to Novgorod with only four *muzhi*, but the local population, including the boyars.

Such local boyars are to be found in Kiev as well. According to the chronicles, the Olgovichy, who in 1136 defeated Kiev Prince Yaropolk Vladimirovich, Monomakh's son, "took many boyars: David Yaroslavich, the millenary, and Stanislav Dobry Tudkovich and other *muzhi* ... for they captured many Kiev boyars."<sup>1</sup> They were no Yaropolk's boyars, but Kiev boyars, i.e., local Kiev nobility.

Prince Yaroslav's *Church Statutes* contain important pointers to the class content of Rus society in the 10th and 11th centuries.

And he whosoever strikes a boyar's daughter, or a boyar's wife shall pay her five *grivnas* of gold for the shame ... and a minor boyar's—one *grivna* of gold ... and of noble people two rubles ... and common men's children—12 *grivnas* of *kunas*. (Art. 3.)

And he who calls another's wife a w...e, and if she is of the noble boyars, she shall be paid 5 *grivnas* of gold for the shame ... and of minor boyars ... 3 *grivnas* of gold ... and of *gorod* people ... three *grivnas* of silver ... and of village people ... one *grivna* of silver (Art. 25.)

This enumeration of "noble boyars, minor boyars, noble people and common people" in the *Statutes* is reiterated on various occasions. Once the noble people are called village people ("and the village wife shall get 60 *rezanas*," or "a *grivna* of silver").<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> B. H. Бенешевич, Сборник памятников по истории церковного права, II, 1915, стр. 79 и 83. (V. N. Beneshevich, *A Collection of Documents on the History of Church Law*, Petrograd, 1915, pp. 79 and 83.)

The authenticity of this data is supported by Art. 7 of the *Metropolitan's Justice*: "And whosoever violates or rapes a girl, and if she is a boyar's daughter or wife, she shall be paid 5 *grivnas* of gold for the shame, and a daughter of minor boyars shall get a *grivna* of gold, and of eminent people 30 *grivnas* of silver, and of noble people 3 rubles...."

Khlebnikov gives the following table of these fines on the basis of Lange's calculations:<sup>1</sup>

Insulting wives:

Of big boyars . . . . .	250 <i>grivnas</i> of <i>kunas</i>
of minor boyars . . . . .	150 " "
urban nobles . . . . .	22½ " "
village people or children . . . . .	17½ " "

Apart from a few obscurities in the monetary units of the *Russkaya Pravda* and other contemporary memorials, it can be safely assumed that the correlation of these figures is correct. This is of great importance. The social gulf between a great boyar and a village freeman (member of the *obshchina*) may be expressed as a ratio of 14:1. The fact cited from the chronicle for 1018 gives a similar ratio. Thus, there are different boyars, just as there are urban and rural inhabitants, of which more later.

The differentiation within the class of landowners reflected in the *Life of Feodosy of Pechera* is highly interesting.

His father was transferred to Kursk upon orders of the Kiev prince. We do not know whether the prince gave a piece of land to Feodosy's father or whether he had some land there previously (probably the former), but it is reported that Feodosy's parents had an estate in the vicinity of Kursk. When his father died, the 13-year-old boy "be-

<sup>1</sup> Н. Хлебников, Общество и государство в домонгольский период русской истории, СПб 1872. (N. Khlebnikov, *Society and State in Pre-Mongol Rus*, St. Petersburg, 1872.)



gan to work assiduously from that time on, and went out with his slaves into the village to work with all diligence." The "ruler of this *gorod*," called a "judge," lived in the town, and Feodosy went to work for this "ruler." He worked in "his church," and once the nobleman bade Feodosy to serve at a feast to which other "noblemen of the *gorod*" were invited.

Here we have a rich nobleman of Kursk in whose service we find the son of a smaller landowner. I believe this nobleman, as well as the other Kursk noblemen, were also landowners, but on a larger scale. Feodosy's mother, who was jealous of her family honour, besought her son not to work as a baker of communion bread in church. ("I pray thee, son, leave off such work, for thou bringest shame upon thy family.") But the dignity of a small landowner, in her opinion, did not suffer from employment in the house of a mighty feudal lord.<sup>1</sup>

The existence of different strata of boyars gives ground to assume that there was a difference in their estate, at least in the initial period of their existence on the territory of Ancient Rus when there were clearly two groups of boyars. If for a period the men-at-arms could resort to the line composed "only of tribute," this definitely cannot be applied to the local nobility which grew up in an agricultural society in the process of the *obshchina* stratification and the appearance of private land tenure.

The most correct solution to the problem is to presume that the power of these boyars was based on land rather than on "treasure."

Boyar landownership in the 9th and 10th centuries had been recognized previously: in the seventies of the last century Khlebnikov asserted that "since the earliest times

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<sup>1</sup> "Патерик Киевского Печерского Монастыря", СПб 1911, стр. 16—19. (*The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, St. Petersburg, 1911, pp. 16-19.)

wealth always lay in land tenure" (naturally, he refers to a predominantly agricultural society—*Author*).<sup>1</sup>

He takes a firmer view of this for the 11th century: "The word boyar did not mean hireling or man-at-arms who earlier played a leading role in the prince's retinue, but denoted local landowners," "the older or leading retinue consisted partly of minor men-at-arms who had been promoted," "the retinue was made up of the local boyars, the rich landowners."<sup>2</sup>

Summing up his investigations, Dyakonov wrote: "Some suppose that the best people of Ancient Rus sprang from among the trading aristocracy, others—that it was a predominantly military nobility; still others believe that from olden times land tenure threw up large landowners for the front ranks of society. One thing is clear, and that is that in the period which has left us sufficient documentary evidence, the boyars and the *ognishchane* were landowners and slave-holders."<sup>3</sup>

In his article *Problems of Ancient Rus History*, Bakhrushin reproaches me for not setting out the stages in the history of land tenure from the 9th to the 12th centuries, as if this process "did not undergo any substantial change from the 9th to the 12th centuries." Naturally, I recognize evolution over a period of four centuries. The attentive reader of my book will find the quantitative growth of land tenure, an evolution in the economic organization of the demesne, and changes in the forms of the exploitation of the worker in production and, finally, changes in the political weight of the large landowners. But Bakhrushin is not satisfied: he declares that "there is not a single report about the villages of the 10th century which does

<sup>1</sup> N. Khlebnikov, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 216, 219, 221 et. al.

<sup>3</sup> М. А. Дьяконов, *Очерки общественного и государственного строя древней Руси*, СПб 1910, стр. 83. (M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 83.) Dyakonov was one of those who failed to notice that the boyars owned not only *kholops*, but also serfs.



not bear the traces of legend," and that in the legend about Olga "the question is not so much of field land as of forests," because, in his opinion, "it was only in the 11th century that agriculture began to predominate," and that "the process of assimilation of *obshchina* lands by the future feudal lords began only in the late 10th century." More will be said later about the "legends" and Olga, but I wish to stress here and now that the evolution of agriculture as represented by my opponent is in contradiction to the facts.

It has earlier been said that it took ages to attain the level of 11th-century agriculture with all the grain and technical crops of which we learn from written and archaeological sources. Suffice it to say that considerable quantities of Slavonic flax were exported to Central Asia via Derbent as early as the 9th century. Obviously, a great deal of time was needed to develop this crop in a land which grew it and exported it to the remote East. The same must be said of other crops cultivated in ancient times. It is superfluous to repeat all the facts adduced in Parts III and IV, but I should add that anyone who wishes to support the opinions of my critic would first have to disprove the arguments quoted above before getting the right to doubt the nature of our information on the villages of the 10th century. Finally, the possibility of legends containing the seed of truth should be considered.

In discussing the appearance of private landownership and the growth of large landholdings it is insufficient to draw a line at the 11th century and declare that large landholdings have existed since the 11th century. The problem consists in discovering the period and the conditions in which this fact became so manifest as to be recognized by even my highly sceptical critic. I admit that lack of material has prevented me from determining the stages in this process, but I insist that only a very lengthy process could lead to the obvious results of the 11th

century. It is very hard to say just when this process began, but there is absolutely no doubt that it was in progress during the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries, since it was a process of the disintegration of the tribe and the formation of a class society in an agricultural environment.

It was a process of the establishment and consolidation of the feudal mode of production, the basis on which the first political units in Rus arose.

In spite of the fact that this is not a new question and that, owing to lack of other sources, it is being continually studied with the aid of the same records, I believe that these still contain untapped possibilities. Once again I have in mind the treaties with the Greeks.

Only Presnyakov pointed out that Igor's Treaty of 944 enumerates the envoys of the persons listed in the treaty, but he failed to draw any conclusions, which are, however, self-evident. The 944 Treaty which was signed on behalf of Prince Igor, his princes and boyars, enumerates these princes and at least a part of the most influential and opulent boyars. Every one of them, man and woman, has his own representative. Ivor is Prince Igor's envoy, and being the representative of so majestic a personage he enjoys a special status. He stands in the first place and does not mix with the other envoys, who are named "common envoys." This general group of envoys includes the representatives of Princess Olga, Igor's wife, and of Prince Svyatoslav, Igor's son, and of Igor's two nephews, as well as those of 20 boyars. Among them we discover Vladislav and Predslava, both of whom are unquestionably Slavs. Uleb, and Gudy, and Uta and Voik are apparently also Slavs.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus gives a similar picture of Princess Olga's embassy to Constantinople. She arrived in Constantinople at the head of a large embassy, which included a group of people whom Constantine calls "apocrisarii of the (Rus) nobles" (οἱ ἀποκριτάριοι τῶν ἀρχόντων). The apocrisarii are the representatives, while the nobles



were unquestionably the eminent princes and boyars mentioned in the treaties with the Greeks. This term cannot be interpreted otherwise, because the Kiev princes mentioned in other Russian sources are named separately: Olga, her son Svyatoslav and one of her nephews. We know of no other Kiev princes. Therefore, it appears that by ἀρχοντες Constantine Porphyrogenitus means the Russian nobility who sent their apocrisiarii, i.e., the boyars which by that time already included the nobility of those peoples who had become a part of Ancient Rus. They are those whom the treaties and the chronicle call the eminent princes and boyars.

This representation indicates that these delegates had some one to represent. The women, who sent their representatives, are highly characteristic in this respect. It must be admitted that the nobles, and apparently their wives and widows listed in the treaty, possessed their own manorial estates in the usual sense of the period, i.e., an estate, various household buildings, land cultivated by the *chelyad* and a certain number of military and civilian servants. It was these large boyar families, who sent their representatives to negotiate with the Greeks. When a boyar died his family estate (castle) did not cease to exist: his widow assumed control ("she is mistress over everything that her husband appointed," *Russkaya Pravda*, The Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 93). She also sent her representative to Byzantium. All this testifies to the *stability* of this large family domain, which passed from husband to wife and children, to their organizational integrity as a group of individuals under the authority of their master. Tribal elders are entirely out of the question. We see the upper strata of a well-developed class society. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain both the existence of the representation and the fact of the treaty itself. And Olga's castle in Vyshgorod, her numerous manors, including the very real village of Olzhichi, which, according to the chronicler, was her personal property, cease to be legend and become

a part of reality. In this the chronicler could not have erred and he had no special reason to invent such facts.<sup>1</sup> There is then no ground to describe the chronicler's account of the princess's village as legend.

Rybakov's trenchant observations set forth in his *Property Insignia in the Princely Economy of Kiev Rus from the 10th to the 12th Centuries*, confirm the assumption that large families were *stable*. The author traces the existence of "property insignia" not only among the princes, but also among the boyars. He is careful to note in the latter case that they "could have belonged to boyars as well as merchants," but he asserts that the insignia on signet-rings "did not belong to princes but to Kiev and Chernigov boyars."<sup>2</sup> Rybakov believes that traces of these tokens may be found as early as the 6th and the 7th centuries. These observations are highly important. Leaving aside the origin of these insignia and taking into consideration their functions in the 10th and 11th centuries, we could deduce the following: 1) The insignia of the reigning house, while preserving a common basis, reflect the individual features of *every family*; 2) these insignia are used to distinguish the *household or manorial estate* of a family, i.e., all their people and stock (the men-at-arms wear them, and the household artisans use them as a hallmark); 3) the boyars, who do not apparently belong to the princely retinue, have their own insignia, otherwise they would have used the insignia of their prince; 4) the big merchants have their own insignia as well; 5) the boyar seals mentioned in the Treaty of 944, must have obviously had the individual insignia of those who sent the delegates to Constantinople, since the delegates went to the Greek capital as representatives only.

<sup>1</sup> We find a similar case later, in 1159, when "Iziaslav and his princess went from Gomus to the Vyatichy, and Svyatoslav captured the princess's *gorod*. (*Ipaty Annals*, p. 344.)

<sup>2</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *Property Insignia in the Princely Economy of Kiev Rus from the 10th to the 12th Centuries*. *Sovetskaya Arkheologia*, No. 6, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, pp. 227-57.



My surmises are supported by yet another interesting though little investigated source, the 1137 *Statute of Novgorod Prince Svyatoslav Olegovich*. It not only records Prince Svyatoslav's decrees, but describes the state of affairs under his ancestors. From this it follows that his ancestors owned land long enough for us to speak of the 10th century, otherwise the expression "great-grandfathers and grandfathers" in the plural would be out of the question.

The fact that the Kiev princes possessed latifundia in Novgorod territory is proved by the behaviour of Ivan III, who confiscated land from St. Sophia and many other rich Novgorod monasteries and quoted documents to prove that it had long been the property of the princes, and that the *veche* had acted illegally when it took it over. He justified his confiscation of church land by such phrases as "since these belonged to the princes from time immemorial, and were seized by them"<sup>1</sup> or "because those *volosts* initially belonged to the Grand Princes, and were later assimilated by them" (the Novgorodites—*Author*).<sup>2</sup>

The Novgorod boyars scarcely differed from the princes as regards land tenure: it was the same process that turned them into large landowners. The difference is only quantitative: the prince is a landowner similar to the boyar, but incomparably wealthier.

And I venture to suggest that some of the Novgorod boyar *muzhi* had their representatives on Igor's delegation to Byzantium in 944. I repeat that this is only a surmise, but it should not, however, be ignored.

The *Statute of Svyatoslav Olegovich* mentions a piece of princely land in Onega. It was managed by a *domazhirich* (administrator—*Author*) who had a separate princely money-chest, apart from the prince's central cash

<sup>1</sup> В. Н. Татищев, История Российская с самых древнейших времен, М. 1848, стр. 67. (V. N. Tatishchev, *A History of Russia from High Antiquity*, Moscow, 1848, p. 67.)

<sup>2</sup> *Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, Vol. VIII, p. 204; Vol. XII, p. 197; Vol. XXIV, p. 198.

room (*klet*) in the prince's household. The *domazhirich* collected the *viras* and the *prodazhas* in the Onega area. The same document lists numerous *pogosts* and other places which paid tithes to the Novgorod Sophia, but these did not come from the *viras* or the *prodazhas*, but from princely tributes, which, being systematically imposed, were soon transformed either into a state tax or, as apparently in this case, into precapitalist land rent.

It is clear that this list covers only a part of the Novgorod territory.

It was noted in the early 19th century, that, to use the modern term, the prince's budget was separated from the state budget. One-third of the tribute went to cover the expenses of his court, while two-thirds went to the state. Olga retained one-third of the tribute imposed on the Drevlyane for her court in Vyshgorod, while the remainder went to Kiev. Yaroslav and other Novgorod rulers representing the Kiev prince paid Kiev two-thirds of the tribute collected, and retained one-third. Mstislav the Bold sent Novgorod two-thirds of the tribute imposed on the Chud and distributed one-third among his gentry, i.e., his court.<sup>1</sup> If that be the case, then the list in Svyatoslav's deed pertains either to that part of the Novgorod *pogosts* which paid for the upkeep of the princely court, or, which is more probable, to the princely demesne. It was from these demesnes that the tithe due to the Sophia Church was collected by the princes. Golubinsky proved that the tithe was imposed only on those who "owned demesnes, real estate and received quitrent."<sup>2</sup> Much the same as Vladimir appointed a tithe for the Kiev Desyatinnaya Church "from his demesne and his gorods" (castles—*Author*) Yaroslav after him "built other churches in the

<sup>1</sup> Ю. А. Гagemейстер, Разыскания о финансах древней России, СПб 1833, стр. 29. (Y. A. Gagemeister, *A Study of Ancient Russian Finances*, St. Petersburg, 1833, p. 29.)

<sup>2</sup> Е. Голубинский, История русской церкви, т. I, ч. I, М. 1901, стр. 507. (Y. Golubinsky, *A History of the Russian Church*, Vol. I, Part I, Moscow, 1901, p. 507.)



*gorods* and the settlements, appointing priests, and paying them specified *dues from his demesne*."

The landholdings of the Novgorod princes, which they had undoubtedly inherited from the earliest times, were very large, highly complex in structure, and interesting in origin. They consisted of separate *pogosts* which were probably individually owned before passing into the hands of the prince, and they continued to bear the name of their former owners. To judge by Rybakov's "property insignia," these lands were assimilated by the princes either before or during Yaroslav's reign. Rybakov tells us of the discovery of a plate with the insignia of the Kiev princes in the south Ladoga area. It was found in a grave of a man-at-arms who apparently belonged to the retinue of Prince Yaroslav, or even his father, since the articles found in the grave date to the mid-10th century, and the insignia, as Rybakov says, "is only similar to that of Yaroslav."<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that such names as Voldutov *pogost*, Tudorov, Ivan-*Pogost*, Rakul, Chudin, Spirkov, etc., were taken from their owners, or perhaps, the owners may have taken their names from them, of which there are numerous instances both in the West and in Russia. We may assume, like Lyubavsky, that the personal names belonged partly to the local nobility, the "Chud elders." But it should be remembered that some of the "Chud elders" became a part of the Novgorod, and later of the Kiev boyars as well. There is the case of a boyar whose name was Chudin (cf. Chudin *pogost* in the deed of Svyatoslav Olegovich), who settled in Kiev prior to 945. (The chronicle's report for that year mentions the household he set up in Kiev on the site which once belonged to the prince.)

I draw the reader's attention to the fact that the names of several large landholders, Novgorod boyars, coincide

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<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-41.

with those who sent their representatives to Byzantium in 944. They include Tudor and Spirk (Sphirk). The 911 Treaty mentions Lidul, who reminds us of Ligui in Svyatoslav's deed. There is nothing improbable in some of the Novgorod nobility (they could have owned land not only in Novgorod but further south as well) participating in an important political venture with their princes Oleg and Igor, both of whom were Novgorodites by birth according to what the chronicler says, apparently with good reason.

These are, of course, surmises, but they merit attention, if only because they are corroborated by other facts relating to princely and boyar land tenure in the 10th century. With the exception of one Ivan, there are no Christian names connected with the northern *pogosts*, most of them possibly being of non-Slav origin, a fact not unusual in Novgorod with its motley ethnical structure.

Some of the names, such as Jskusewi, Kanizar and Pubjinksar appear to be Estonian (Chud).<sup>1</sup>

I am not at all inclined to under-estimate the importance of industries either in the 10th and 11th centuries, or much later, but they did not play a decisive part at that time. My argument is not disproved by the fact that in the 10th and 11th centuries the Rus princes and boyars had much gold, silver, furs and fabrics which did not come from agriculture, but fell into their hands either as booty, or as the result of exchange for the products of the hunt and bee-keeping. We can only marvel at the quantity of these treasures, if we are to believe the chronicler. There is the following inscription for 1158: "This Yaropolk gave all his treasures, the Neblskaya *volost* and the Derevskaya and the Luchskaya and the one near Kiev; during his lifetime with the princess Gleb gave 600 *grivnas* of silver and 50 *grivnas* of gold: and after the prince's death the prin-

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<sup>1</sup> Я. Зутис, Русско-эстонские отношения в IX—XIV вв. (*Историк-марксизм*, № 3, 1940, стр. 40). (Y. Zutis, *Russo-Estonian Relations in the 9th-14th Centuries. Istorik-Marxist*, No. 3, 1940, p. 40.)



cess gave 100 *grivnas* of silver, and 50 *grivnas* of gold; and she ordered that after her death five villages with *chelyad* and all her property even to the last thread be given also."<sup>1</sup>

Discoveries of Ancient Rus caches seem to confirm the reports of the chronicle.

All this is easily explained by the fact that the trading capital of the Asian East as well as the Scandinavian North and Greek South became active on the territory occupied by the Eastern Slavs at a very early date. However, the wealth of the Novgorod and Kiev nobility consisted of land, rather than valuables. The chronicler's report of Prince Yaropolk's contribution of land to the church fund says that he had given the monastery "all his life,"<sup>2</sup> meaning that land was the basis of the prince's property status. Many similar facts spread throughout the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* therefore became clear.

The village of Olzhichi unquestionably belonged to Olga. ("To this day there stands her village Olzhichi.") Vyshgorod was a *gorod* (castle) of the same Princess Olga.<sup>3</sup> The village of Budutino, to which she exiled her housekeeper Malusha for some offence, also belonged to her. This recalls Budyata's wharf in Novgorod. Budyata, or Buduta, was without doubt a rich citizen of Novgorod, who owned ships, the wharf and possibly land as well.

Izyaslavl *gorod* belonged to Rogneda. Before she and her son received it, Vladimir set aside one of his manors for her. How else can we interpret that part of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* which reports that Vladimir sent one of his wives, the Polotsk Princess Rogneda, to live on the Lybed, where the little village of Predslavino now stands.<sup>4</sup> Vladimir had six children by Rogneda and naturally took care to place her in comfortable circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 947 and 946; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. Part I, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* for 1128 and 980, and p. 56.

Rogneda must have kept a real court on the Lybed with a household and the usual appointments. It is possible that this estate later passed to Predslava, Vladimir's daughter, born of Rogneda, and came to be known as Predslavino. There can hardly be a more likely interpretation of the chronicle's story.

Berestovo was an outlying village on the outskirts of a town belonging to Prince Vladimir.<sup>1</sup> The princely village of Rakoma, visited by Prince Yaroslav on the night of the Novgorod massacre of the Varangians in Paramon's household,<sup>2</sup> stood in the vicinity of Novgorod as early as the late 10th and early 11th centuries.

All these are facts that have accidentally been preserved from the 10th century. The chronicler did not intend to describe princely and boyar land tenure. He mentioned the princely villages in the natural course of his story and that is why his remarks are so convincing.

Presnyakov also believes boyar land tenure to be a phenomenon of long standing. He points out that the "mention of boyar villages is casual, but they are mentioned in passing as being something very commonplace."<sup>3</sup> I think he is right. The mention of boyar villages in the 10th century is only a hint at a social phenomenon widespread at the time and also much earlier.

The facts are much more plentiful in the 11th and 12th centuries. Izyaslav Yaroslavich had a manor near Dorogobuzh, apparently prior to the compilation of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, i.e., before the mid-11th century. One of his grooms was killed there by the inhabitants of Dorogobuzh.<sup>4</sup>

In 1087 the chronicler said the following regarding the death of Yaropolk Izyaslavich: "Yaropolk (in his lifetime, naturally—*Author*) gave the Virgin Mary a tithe of all

<sup>1</sup> *Lavrenty Annals* for 980; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals* for 1015; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. 1, p. 195.

<sup>4</sup> *Brief Pravda*, Art. 23.



his cattle and grain.”<sup>1</sup> In 1096, considering the war ended, Prince Mstislav “dismissed his men-at-arms to their villages.”<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Monomakh took great care of his manors, as is evidenced by his *Precepts*: “When walking about your lands, do not let children, whether your own or of others, be mischievous, either in the villages, or in the fields, lest ye be cursed.”<sup>3</sup> A princely manor near Polotsk<sup>4</sup> is mentioned in 1128 in the *Life of St. Yefrosinia*, princely manors are mentioned in the lands of the Severyane in 1146<sup>5</sup>, and in the Smolensk principality in 1150<sup>6</sup>. Princely manors surrounded Lubech and Chernigov in the 12th century, while Andrei Bogolubsky had a *gorod* or castle called Bogolubov and many “*slobodas* purchased and beautiful villages” in the Rostov-Suzdal territory. Reports of the pillage of boyar villages are common in the 12th century<sup>7</sup>. Fyodorets, the Bishop of Vladimir, “caused much suffering to the people ... and destroyed many villages, arms and horses...”<sup>8</sup>

In 1128-32, Prince Mstislav Vladimirovich and his son Vsevolod donated their Buitse manor to the Yuriev Monastery “together with the tribute and the *viras* and the *prodazhas*.”<sup>9</sup> In 1150, the Smolensk prince, Rostislav Mstislavich, gave several of his manors to the Smolensk bishopric.<sup>10</sup> Prince Yaropolk gave the Neblskaya, Derevskaya and Luchskaya *volosts* to the monastery, while his daughter bequeathed it five manors with *chelyad*.<sup>11</sup> Prince

<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1910, p. 230; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237 and pp. 157-58.

<sup>4</sup> Y. Golubinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 522, Note.

<sup>5</sup> П. В. Голубовский, История Северской земли до половины XIV столетия, Киев 1881, стр. 28. (P. V. Golubovsky, *A History of the Severskaya Territory up to the Mid-14th Century*, Kiev, 1881, p. 28.)

<sup>6</sup> *Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. I, №4, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, pp. 24, 26, 54.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 377.

<sup>9</sup> *Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. I, No 2, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 338.

Andrei Bogolubsky laid the foundations of a church in Vladimir, and among his other gifts presented it with "slobodas purchased and beautiful villages."<sup>1</sup> In 1192 Varlaam of Khutynsk gave "the Holy Savior land and a vegetable patch and hunting-grounds ... and meadows."<sup>2</sup>

In 1171, after taking Dorogobuzh by means of a ruse following the death of Vladimir Andreyevich, Vladimir Mstislavich addressed his men-at-arms thus: "By the cross I swear to you and to your princess that I shall do you no wrong, neither to her, nor to her manors."<sup>3</sup> In 1150, in a speech to his men-at-arms, Prince Izyaslav mentions land tenure by them as a commonplace fact: "You followed me out of the Rus land and were deprived of your manors and your lives." In this case the man-at-arms is regarded as a landowner.<sup>4</sup>

In 1177, there is a report about the burning down of "boyar villages"<sup>5</sup> in the Suzdal territory. In 1146, the Kievites "pillaged ... the houses of Igor's and Vsevolod's men-at-arms and their manors and cattle."<sup>6</sup>

In 1209, the citizens of Novgorod summoned a *veche* to pass judgement on the *posadnik* Dmitry and his brothers and then set fire to their households, while their "manors and *chelyad* were sold."<sup>7</sup> It is obvious that these manors were set up and developed not by the boyar Dmitry himself, who was killed in 1209, nor yet by his father. We have here a hereditary estate of an ancient boyar family.

Svyatoslav Olegovich had a large village in Putivl, of which there is casual mention: in 1146 it was attacked and the enemy captured a great quantity of goods: "They divided Svyatoslav's household into four, and the money-

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<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 1158.

<sup>2</sup> *Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. I, No. 5, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 374.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.

<sup>5</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 362.

<sup>6</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 233.

<sup>7</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 191; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 248.



chest, and the store-rooms, and the goods, which could not be moved; and there were 500 barrels of honey in the cellars and 80 barrels of wine; they plundered the Church of the Holy Assension, and took away all the silver vessels and the raiment which was inlaid with gold, two big censers and two small censers, and a bible with embossed covers, and books and the bells, and left nothing of the prince's property, but divided everything as well as 700 *chelyad*."<sup>1</sup>

The well-appointed household of Prince Igor, Svyatoslav's brother, is described in the same chronicle in some detail: "But they went to Igor's manor where he had set up a fine court; there were a lot of preserves, and honey and wine was plentiful in the cellars, and as for all kinds of heavy goods including iron and copper, they could not carry it all out because of the quantity. The two Davidovichy ordered their own carts and their men's carts loaded and then ordered to set fire to the manor-house and the Church of St. Georgy and his grain stores which had 900 ricks."<sup>2</sup> These manors had appeared very much earlier than the early 12th century.

Recalling the past and comparing it with the present the Novgorod chronicler of the late 11th century asserted that in olden times the princes and their men-at-arms had thrived mainly on wars with other peoples, and did not exploit their own estates excessively. But times had changed. The exploitation of their own demesnes became the chief source of enrichment. This led to the coercion of their compatriots. The chronicler censures this behaviour of his contemporaries. It was because of this, he explained, that God had sent "the heathen" on the Rus land, and "our cattle and our villages and estates have fallen into their hands."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the chronicler emphasizes the existence of landholdings among the ruling classes in the 11th

<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 2; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 104.

century as well as much earlier. But he implies that land-owners were kinder to their subjects in olden times, and that is why no one seized their estates, as later happened in punishment for their misdeeds. This is the gist of the chronicler's reasoning.

The Church in Rus owned real estate from the very moment of its appearance. A highly interesting fact, largely ignored by scholars, is the way in which the first Rus Metropolitan was provisioned. Following the baptism of Rus, Vladimir Svyatoslavich invited a Metropolitan from Greece, who was to live in Kiev. ("...He took from the Tsar-grad Patriarch the first Metropolitan for Kiev.") Kiev was the natural seat of the Rus Metropolitan. Nevertheless he was given Pereyaslavl on the Dnieper. I think Golubinsky is right in assuming that Vladimir gave the *gorod* to the Metropolitan "in order to make him a kind of prince,"<sup>1</sup> to put him on an equal footing with the highest Rus nobility, which by that time derived its prestige from its land-holdings.

The Kiev Pechera Monastery owned villages in the 11th century. The *Life of Feodosy of Pechera* reveals that these villages were numerous and that they were exploited under the supervision of a monastery administration. Before his death Feodosy summoned his brethren "who had gone to the village or on some other business," and began to teach them "how to fulfil the task allotted to each one of them with the utmost diligence."<sup>2</sup> It appears then that work in the villages was a normal occupation of the brethren of the Pechera Monastery in the 11th century. This means that agriculture was carried on there, although the landowner's holding itself was not very extensive. The villages of the Pechera Monastery were not poor, and one of them attracted the attention of "robbers." It is very difficult to understand, therefore, why the monks of that monastery were often in dire poverty and had literally noth-

<sup>1</sup> Y. Golubinsky, op. cit., p. 329, Note 1.

<sup>2</sup> *The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, pp. 52-53.



ing to eat. The most plausible explanation is that the author of *Feodosy's Life* cites facts from the period when the monastery was still poor. But it may well be that the author found it expedient to exaggerate the poverty of the monastery under Feodosy.

Manors were so common as a basis of the existence of 11th-century feudal lords and of such value to the landowners that their loss was tantamount to the loss of the source of life itself; sometimes their loss was compared to the loss of dearly loved children. This idea was clearly expressed by Feodosy: threatened with seclusion he remained absolutely calm and explained his fortitude by the fact that he had no ties binding him to the outside world. ("For if I had riches I should be constrained by their loss, and I should grieve if deprived of children or of manors.")

The story of the Pechera Monastery tells of a hill "donated" by Prince Izyaslav to the cloister when it already possessed a number of villages. There is yet another account of villages being donated to the monastery by the boyar Yefrem.

We have abundant evidence, therefore, of both lay and ecclesiastical land tenure in the 11th century. In the 12th century such facts are much more numerous. They prove that the princes, boyars and the church, i.e., the ruling classes of the Slav and non-Slav society united in the 10th and 11th centuries under Kiev were connected with the land, although their wealth did not always come from it. Nevertheless, it was land tenure that was becoming increasingly important as the basis for the prosperity of these upper classes. It also provided additional opportunities for every other kind of acquisition. The growth of land tenure produced larger landholdings and more landowners and led to changes in the form of pre-capitalist land rent. In this respect the 13th and 14th centuries naturally differed greatly from the 10th and the 11th. Changes also took place in the manner in which the economies were run and in the form of exploi-

tation of the dependent population. Far from denying evolution in this sphere, I emphasize it with all the means at my disposal, but I am unable precisely to date its stages. Therefore I confine myself to an exposition of the facts which cannot be ignored.

There is very little data concerning the disposal of landholdings in the 11th century. However, since there is some, and since the existence of private landownership is beyond doubt, we are justified in assuming that landowners had the right to dispose of their land as they saw fit.

This right to dispose of land is specified in Art. 91 of the *Extensive Pravda*: "About the inheritance of boyars and men-at-arms. If anyone dies from among the boyars or men-at-arms the inheritance does not go to the prince, but if there are no sons it shall be taken by the daughters."<sup>1</sup> It appears that there was a time, perhaps in the not very distant past, when the people in the princely court lived at the expense of the prince. But times had changed and it was not only the boyars, but also the men-at-arms who had become a landowning class. All landowners received the right to dispose of their land. In its list of the most common court cases the *Extensive Pravda* also mentions litigation about field land.<sup>2</sup>

Legal procedure governing the inheritance of land bequeathed or handed down according to law which is set out with an amount of detail unusual for the *Extensive Pravda* bears witness to the same fact.<sup>3</sup>

Following the statement that the boyars and the men-at-arms have the right to dispose of their land, there are several articles which elaborate this right. Art. 92 says that "if anyone on his death-bed divides his *dom* among his children it shall remain so..." Art. 93 adds: "If the

<sup>1</sup> Art. 91 is preceded by the well-known article "If a *Smerd* Dies" which stipulates that his land passes to the prince if he has no male successors.

<sup>2</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Troitsk Copy, Art. 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Arts. 90-95, 98-106, 108-109.



wife remains after the husband, she shall be given a part..." The *dom* in this case is the demesne. The great detail in which this subject is dealt with indicates the concern of the landowners for their rights to their demesnes.

From this, the following conclusions may be drawn: 1) the number of landowners was growing; 2) the value of land was constantly rising; 3) land relations among various classes were becoming increasingly complicated: one discerns proprietary features characteristic of feudal society.

This should not be forgotten in spite of all the glitter of gold, silks, precious stones and other "treasures" in the store-rooms of the rulers. One is reminded of the words of the German envoys who came to Prince Svyatoslav in 1075: Svyatoslav was showing off his riches and "they, seeing the countless quantities of gold and silver and rich cloths, said: 'All this comes to nothing, for it lies dead, comrades are better than this, for the *muzhi* can obtain this and more than this.'"<sup>1</sup> It may well be that they never said anything of the sort, and that the chronicler merely seized the opportunity to express his own convictions regarding the value of men-at-arms. Nevertheless, the idea expressed is correct and characteristic of the period. All these treasures really were not put to use: Precapitalist land rent was more modest but more reliable, because it represented the future. The agricultural economy of the petty producer and his exploitation by the large landowner were already cardinal facts.

But it would be a great mistake to think that the princely, church or boyar demesnes of the 11th century were anything like the 14th and 15th century estates described in the books of the Novgorod scribes, in the wills of the princes and boyars,<sup>2</sup> in the treaty of Yuriev Monastery

<sup>1</sup> *Lawrenty Annals; The Fourth Novgorod Annals.*

<sup>2</sup> Собрание государственных грамот и договоров, т. I, № 40, стр. 130 и др. (*A Collection of State Deeds and Treaties*, Vol. I, No. 40, p. 130, etc.)

with the peasants of the Robichinskaya *volost*,<sup>1</sup> or in other records of the 14th and 15th centuries.

The 11th-century demesne differed from the 14th-century demesne in its organization and in the nature of the dependence of the producers working for the lord of the manor, in the form of precapitalist land rent paid by the people held in fee by the lord, and, finally, in its economic and political significance.

The demesne had a long history prior to the 15th century. But its appearance alone had decisively affected the history of the rural population: 1) it drew a dividing line between the class of privileged landowners and the rural mass which continued to live in its *obshchinas*; 2) the owners of the demesne seized considerable expanses of community land and subjugated the farmers who were members of the *obshchinas* and who lived on it; 3) they also attracted a considerable section of the farmers who had been forced to leave the *obshchina*, and made them into their dependents.

In this manner there arose three main groups of rural population: 1) peasants, members of the *obshchina*, who were still independent of the feudal lord; 2) peasants, members of the *obshchina*, who found themselves in the lord's fee together with their land; and 3) people detached from the *obshchina* and deprived of the means of production, who found themselves on another's land and as such were regarded as labour power held in fee by the feudal lord. Each of these groups has its own history. Many errors were made due to non-differentiation between the last two groups.

To examine them we shall have to look into the organization of a large Rus feudal demesne in the period from the 10th to the 12th centuries.

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<sup>1</sup> Б. Д. Греков, Феодальная деревня Московского государства XIV—XVI вв., М.—Л. 1935, док. № 17. (B. D. Grekov, *The Feudal Village in Muscovy in the 14th-16th Centuries*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1935, Document No. 17.) Макарий, Описание Новгородского Юрьева монастыря, СПб 1862, стр. 66. (Macarius, *A Description of the Novgorod Yuriev Monastery*, St. Petersburg, 1862, p. 66.)



## 2. THE LARGE DEMESNE BETWEEN THE 9TH AND 12TH CENTURIES

After Yaroslav died, i.e., shortly after 1054<sup>1</sup> a conference held by his sons—Izyaslav, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod—and their men-at-arms which discussed the princely demesne reveals the organization of this ancient Rus unit.

While we can only speculate on the reasons for such a conference, its results are embodied in the *Pravda of Yaroslavichy*.

The *Extensive Pravda* contains facts which throw a light upon this conference of the princes and their boyars: "After the death of Yaroslav his sons met again: Izyaslav, Svyatoslav, Vsevolod and their *muzhi*: Kosnyachko, Pereneg and Nikifor, and they abolished the death penalty for murder, and established that a fine shall be paid in *kunas*; and the rest, as Yaroslav had judged, so his sons retained.

The aim of the conference is apparently thus clearly specified. It was to revise the penal code and abolish the outdated blood feud which had been earlier placed under state control. The practice was revised and the blood feud officially banned. Otherwise things remained as they had been under Yaroslav. This is a highly important remark. The question is, does this apply only to the earliest part of the *Pravda* which we have reason to assume was given

<sup>1</sup> Tikhomirov thinks that the conference was held in 1072 in Vyshgorod on the occasion of the transfer of the relics of Boris and Gleb. M. H. Тухомиров, Исследование о Русской Правде, М.—Л. 1941, стр. 64—65. (M. N. Tikhomirov, *A Study of "Russkaya Pravda"*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1941, pp. 64-65). I believe that it was held much earlier, very shortly after the death of Yaroslav, which is why the *Pravda* sets the time as being "after Yaroslav," similarly to another such conference under Vladimir Monomakh held "after Svyatopolk," i. e., immediately after his death and the arrival of Vladimir Monomakh in Kiev. I think that Yaroslav's three sons began to act immediately after their father's death. "After Yaroslav" would scarcely be the expression used to denote a date 20 years after his death. The general situation called for such a conference. His sons, who had agreed to rule Rus collectively, had to discuss numerous problems, which is why their meeting was held directly after their father's death.

by Yaroslav to the Novgorodites, or to its other parts as well? At this stage there is room only for hypothesis. It would, of course, be easier to ignore it altogether, but that would scarcely be the best way out of the situation.

It was earlier proved that princes and boyars had landholdings in the 10th century (and, beyond doubt, much earlier). Consequently, Yaroslav found princely demesnes in existence in Novgorod and Kiev which had reached a certain level of organization. There must have been people in the princely demesne to keep the economy going—the administrative staff and the various producers.

The state of affairs hallowed by custom could not have been greatly altered if Yaroslav's children let things run as "Yaroslav had judged." It is true, of course, that his children were not absolutely passive in this respect. Iziaslav, for instance, "judged" the murderers of his chief groom who had been killed by the inhabitants of Dorogobuzh. This happened before the conference of the princes which approved his judgement and included it in the new code. This incident indicates that there was a princely demesne in Dorogobuzh or its district.

Thus we seem to be getting a clearer picture of the period reflected in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*: it is not only the period of the Yaroslavichy, but also of Yaroslav, i.e., the first half of the 11th century.

Since it is obvious that the demesne took some time to organize we may safely assume that the facts relating to the early 11th century can also be applied to the princely demesne of the 10th century mentioned in the chronicles, as well as to the boyar demesnes dealt with in the treaties with the Greeks of the early 10th century, and consequently, the 9th as well.

I may be reproached for making arbitrary use of chronologically differing data. Therefore, I shall try to reconstruct the main outlines of the Ancient Rus demesne on the evidence presented by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* alone.



The princely court is the centre of this demesne. (Art. 38, Academic Copy.) This consists above all of the keep or *khoromy* in which the prince lives from time to time, the houses of his high-ranking servants, buildings for the other servants, the dwellings of *smerds*, *ryadovichy* and *kholops*, and the various outhouses—stables, cow sheds, coops, a hunting lodge, etc.

The princely demesne is headed by a representative of the prince—a boyar called an *ognishchanin*. He is the manager of the demesne and is responsible for the princely property. He is apparently assisted by a collector of various dues—a "*podyezdnói knyazh*." The *ognishchanin* has *tiuns* at his disposal. The *Pravda* also names a "chief groom," i.e., the man in charge of the prince's stables and his herds.

All of them are protected by the 80-*grivna vira*, an indication of their privileged position. It is they who make up the highest administrative staff of the princely demesne. Then we have the prince's *starostas*: the *selsky* and the *ratainy*. Their life is valued only at 12 *grivnas*, and they are no doubt bondmen. What their exact functions are we cannot say, but to judge from their titles, the *selsky starosta* is probably a man charged with watching over the inhabitants of the demesne and an assistant to the "chief administrator." Since *ratai* meant "ploughman," and *ratainy*—an adjective pertaining to field cultivation, we may assume that the *ratainy starosta* was an overseer in charge of field cultivation. Since he was a servant of the prince and supervised work in the prince's demesne it is logical to assume the existence of field land belonging to the prince. This assumption is supported by the fact that the *Pravda* speaks of a boundary line and lays down a very substantial fine for its infringement which is second only to

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the word *podyezd* which in the 15th and 16th centuries denoted the bishop's right to come and collect dues; it was sometimes used to denote the bishop's dues; the *podyezdchik* was a collector of the *podyezd*.

that imposed for murder. "And he who ploughs up the boundary line shall pay 12 *grivnas* for the offence." (Art. 34.) Such a high fine would hardly apply to the boundary line of a peasant field (the theft of the prince's horse was subject to a fine of 3 *grivnas*, and of the "prince's apiarium"—3 *grivnas*).

These observations are also supported by details scattered in various parts of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* which names the store-room, the cattle-shed and a wide variety of draught animals and milk and meat cattle, as well as fowl common to large agricultural holdings. We find horses belonging to the prince and to the *smerd* (peasant), as well as oxen, cows, goats, sheep, pigs, hens, pigeons, ducks, geese, swans and cranes.

Meadows where the cattle and the prince's and peasant's horses graze are not mentioned, but are obviously implied.

Side by side with the field land we find apiaria which are called "princely": "And for the princely apiarium three *grivnas*, if it is burnt down or if the bees are stolen." (Art. 32.)

The *Pravda* lists the categories of producers who service the demesne. They are the *ryadovichy*, the *smerds* and the *kholops*, of whom more later. Their life is valued at 5 *grivnas*.

It may be assumed that the prince visits his demesne from time to time. This is indicated by the presence of dogs and falcons trained for the hunt. "And if another's dog, or hawk, or falcon be stolen, 3 *grivnas* for the offence." (Art. 37.) It is true that it is not said that the dog, the falcon and the hawk belong to the prince's hunt only, but I think that one can infer that much, firstly, because the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* deals mainly with the princely demesne, and, secondly, because the high fine imposed for the theft of a dog, a hawk and a falcon cannot be explained otherwise, for it is equal to a fine imposed for the theft of a prince's horse and is only a *grivna*



below the fine imposed for the theft of a horse with which the *smerd* works for the prince.<sup>1</sup>

The *Pravda* depicts the prince in his demesne as a landowner and a feudal lord with certain feudal rights in respect of the population he holds in fee as the lord of the manor. The entire administrative staff and the population of the demesne are under his jurisdiction. They can be judged only with his permission and cognizance. ("And if a *smerd* is judged without the permission of the prince, three *grivnas* for the offence; and if it is an *ognishchanin*, or a *tiun* or a *mechnik*—12 *grivnas*."—Art. 33 of the Academic Copy.)

There is another very significant fact pertaining to the princely demesne. It does not exist in a vacuum, but is within the *mir* and is directly and closely connected with the rural *obshchina*. This is no mere hypothesis, but a theory which is quite easily demonstrated.

The *Pravda* (Art. 19) says that if an *ognishchanin* is killed and the murderer is known, the 80-*grivna* fine is paid by the latter, "but the people do not have to pay anything." If the murderer is not discovered, the "people" are responsible ("the *vira* must be paid by those in whose *verv* the body was found"). (Art. 20.) This *verv* of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* is the *mir* of Yaroslav's *Pravda*. I wish to emphasize the relationship between the large demesne and the rural *obshchina*.

The princely community is connected territorially with some rural communities; with others, not adjacent to it, it is connected administratively. An *ognishchanin* may happen to be killed not only in the *verv* with which the demesne is connected, but in other *vervs* as well. The responsibility for the murder of an *ognishchanin*—and, of course, of all the other members of the administrative staff of the demesne—lies with the *verv* on whose territory the

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<sup>1</sup> "*Smerdy kon*" in the original may be interpreted to denote a horse belonging to the *smerd*. This, I think, is the most plausible interpretation. But it may well be that it means a prince's horse with which the dependent *smerd* works.

body was found (when the murderer is unknown). This is an indication that the *ognishchanin*, the *podyezdny*s and the *tiuns* have a sphere of action extending beyond the boundaries of the demesne. It may also be an indication that the functions of the princely administrators are not only economic, but also political.

The fact that the princely demesne is placed within the peasant *mir* does much to elucidate the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*. We begin to understand why it was compiled and why a conference of the three Yaroslavichy and their men-at-arms was convened. It also clarifies the relations between the demesne and its owner, particularly an owner like the prince.

I hope I am not mistaken in assuming that Yaroslav's children were faced with the problem of studying the relations between the lord of the manor and the peasant *obshchina*. It is true that the conference decided to leave things as they were under Yaroslav, with the exception of the blood feud. But, firstly, it set down the common law in the form of a written law, and, secondly, it underlined the role of the state, i.e., the superstructure which the feudal lords needed to consolidate their positions. By abolishing the blood feud it transferred the punitive functions of the *obshchina* to the state. The statutes governing the most important internal affairs of the demesne henceforward became a sort of handbook for every prince. This was apparently necessary because the authority of the Kiev Prince in the mid-11th century, particularly after Yaroslav's death, was so shaken and local centres on the vast territory of Ancient Rus had so matured that there arose a need to localize their authority and to define their activities by framing standard laws.

History posed before the sons of Yaroslav new problems, and it is understandable why they had a new approach to them. They came together to discuss the new situation and to take the steps necessary under the circumstances.

It was not the princes alone who were concerned with the relations between the lord of the manor and the rural



*obshchina*. All large landowners, and, of course, the boyars, were also concerned, as well as the Church, although there were still as yet only a few large landowners among church dignitaries.

This explains why the boyars regarded the new statutes as a directive and a handbook: the interests of all the lords who owned demesnes were basically alike.

It cannot be mere chance that an inscription was made, apparently by some "lawyer," in the margin of the *Extensive Pravda* opposite the enumeration of the staff of the princely demesne (more elaborate than in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*), which read: "And of the boyars as well." This meant that all fines imposed for the murder of the servants of the princely demesne were applicable also to the murder of the servants of the boyar demesnes.

The first impression produced by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* and also by the *Extensive Pravda*, for that matter, is that the lord of the manor with his host of servants of varying rank and importance, the owner of the land, industries, bailey, slaves, farm animals and fowl, serfs, worried by the possibility of murder and theft, strives to protect himself by means of a system of heavy fines imposed for every act infringing his rights. This first impression is correct. The *Pravdas* do in fact protect the lord of the manor against every action directed against his servants, peasants, slaves both male and female, his land, horses, oxen, ducks, hens, dogs, hawks, falcons, etc.

Who was it the lord of the manor had to be on guard against? A neighbouring feudal lord like himself would scarcely covet one of his doves, hens or ducks, or attempt to plough up the boundary line of a princely or boyar field. He would sooner appear with his men-at-arms, fire the keep and make off with the valuables. He in his turn would be dealt with in a similar manner: an armed raid, with all its consequences. It is not such dangers that the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* has in mind when it outlines defence measures. It sees the threat arising from the population

of the neighbouring villages who are antagonistic to the large landowner firmly entrenched in his castle.

The villagers well knew the results of having such a neighbour and strove to avoid it at all costs. The *Lives of the Saints* are full of their protests. With the growth of church landholdings, the peasants were later forced to protest repeatedly to the elders who built the monasteries: "Why didst thou build the monastery in our land, or dost thou wish to take possession of our lands and villages?"<sup>1</sup>

For this very reason, Daniil Zatochnik, meditating on poverty and penury, recalls the words of King Solomon whom he quotes as saying: "Spare me, O Lord, from wealth and from destitution: if I become rich, I shall assume pride and violence; and in destitution shall I incline to theft and robbery..." "Theft and robbery," as Daniil puts it, were the poor man's answer to the violence of the rich. Therefore the same Daniil gave very revealing advice: "Do not keep your village near a prince's village: for his *tiun* flares like fire, and his *ryadovichy* are like sparks. Even if you save yourself from the fire, you cannot be safe from the sparks..."

This is undoubtedly a picture drawn from life. Without embellishment and formality, and in a jocular form, Daniil presents aphorisms which are full of meaning and which form an excellent commentary on his times.

I have confined myself to the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* (the quotation from Daniil Zatochnik is only a brief commentary on the *Pravda*) in order to give the reader an idea of the wealth of material regarding the princely demesne and its surroundings which it contains. But the *Extensive Pravda* also deals with the internal relations within the demesne.

One is inclined to believe that legislation becomes increasingly concerned with the life of the demesne. The

<sup>1</sup> М. М. Богословский, Земское самоуправление на русском Севере в XVII в., т. I, М. 1909, стр. 88. (M. M. Bogoslovsky, *Local Self-Government in the Russian North in the 17th Century*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1909, p. 88.)



earliest *Pravda* speaks of the free *muzh* and his *chelyad* very obscurely, which nevertheless implies the existence of the demesne. The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* discloses the meaning of *chelyad* (*ryadovichy*, *smerd*, *kholop*) and gives a clear picture of its structure, its owner's rights and his dependents' duties, while the *Extensive Pravda* adds a number of details which events forced upon the legislators.

Vladimir Monomakh, who was invited to Kiev in 1113 during a decisive and large-scale popular movement both in town and village, had to take stock of the situation and found it necessary to curb to some extent the appetites of those "who craved glory and could not be satiated with riches." His concern for the fate of the dependent people was expressed in his *Precepts* ("I protected the poor *smerd* and the lowly widow from the mighty") and recorded in the *Russkaya Pravda*. It was not only a struggle against exorbitant interest rates, but interference in the internal affairs of the large demesne. He dealt with the status of the *ryadovichy*, the *kholops* and, as he himself says, the *smerds*.

There is nothing basically new in this account of the *Extensive Pravda*. The demesne which is depicted in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* also continues to function as a well-organized unit in the 12th century. The *Extensive Pravda* merely specifies and adds to the facts at our disposal.

First of all, this *Pravda* extends the list of servants in the princely and boyar demesnes. Arts. 11-17 name the following: *otrok*, groom, cook, *ognishchny tiun* and stable *tiun*, *selsky tiun*, and *ratainy tiun*, *ryadovich*, handicraftsman (male and female), *smerd*, *kholop*, female slave, nurse (male and female).

This group of dependents in the demesne may be divided into two main groups: 1) servants and 2) producers, the working population of the demesne in the direct sense of the word. The *otroks*, grooms, *tiuns* and nurses are the

servants, while the *ryadovichy*, *smerds*, *kholops* and handicraftsmen are the workers.

The large demesne continued to exist with a similar population pattern for a long time, even in parts of Rus which later fell under Polish rule, such as the Galich lands.

The *Extensive Pravda* deals in greater detail with the status of the *ryadovichy*, and *kholops* who, it appears, suffered most from the arbitrary actions of the lord.

The *ryadovichy*, or one of their common varieties, are called *zakup*s by the *Extensive Pravda*. These will be examined later. At the moment I do not wish to deal with the legal and economic status of the *zakup*, but rather with the economy of the demesne on which the *zakup* works.

The *Extensive Pravda* pays special attention to the *roleiny zakup* who is a worker engaged in field farming. Taking advantage of the existence of a large number of people divorced from the means of production and forced to work on any terms, the landlord tries to engage a labour force for his agricultural holding. He owns land, cattle and agricultural implements and is in need of labour power. He secures it in various ways, one of which is *zakupnichestvo*. The *zakup* is required to work and handle with care his master's cattle and implements of production. The plough and harrow are lent, but draught animals are another matter. He is allowed to use his master's horse on rare occasions only, and has to tend the landowner's cattle with diligence.

What the owner fears most is that the *zakup* may leave his cattle in the fields at night. He demands that he herd them into special sheds. The master is very much afraid of "thieves."

Since the *zakup* uses his master's horse to work in the fields, the lord sees to it that the horse is well treated. This is a very characteristic feature: being accustomed to the work of slaves, the lord realizes that they have no incentive to handle with care the master's property, be it plough or horse. He had no reason to suppose that the



*zakup* was interested in preserving his property, so he took the necessary precautions. The law, which declared its protection of the *zakup* against the arbitrary actions of the lord, nevertheless sided with the latter and proclaimed only a moderate degree of equity. If a horse is lost owing to no manifest fault of the *zakup*, the latter is not responsible for the loss. He bears the responsibility only when it is stolen as a result of his negligence or dies through overwork on the *zakup's* personal plot. The law lays down an elementary equity of which, it may be suspected, the *zakup* was deprived prior to the 1113 uprising, and prior to the enforced interference of Vladimir Monomakh in the affairs of the demesne.

If we accept the premise that Monomakh's law was an attempt to right the wrongs which gave rise to the popular movement, it should be pointed out that there was a tendency among the landowners to retain the *zakup* by means of an arbitrary increase of the *kupa*, or the earnest money which limited the *zakup's* freedom in some manner. The lord often tried to treat him as a slave, by hiring him out; the former was not in the habit of differentiating between the legal status of his servants and used to sell the *zakup* outright, by making him out to be a slave. Finally, being in the habit of beating his slaves, the lord beat the *zakup* as well. The law regarded this coercion of the labour force in the demesne as being so natural that it did not abolish corporal punishment, but only specified its conditions: the *zakup* can be beaten only for an offence and only when sober. These methods of coercing the *chelyad* undoubtedly developed against the background of complete lawlessness and the servility of the people held in fee by the lord, among whom there were many slaves.

But it should be noted that the lord's powers are being gradually curtailed and placed under the control of a court, while the *kholops* themselves are not what they used to be. This was of course not due to an improvement in the lord's morals, but to changes in the economic system. The slave ceased to be profitable and was being successfully

replaced by the *ryadovichy* and the *smerds*, a process noted by the *Extensive Pravda*. After listing all the sources of slavery, with the exception of crime, the *Pravda* attempts to show the way in which one can avoid the pitfalls of this law and then describes the slave's role in the economy. It should be noted that the special section of the *Pravda* on the *kholops* does not regard the slave as labour power in agriculture, a fact which, of course, does not mean that slave labour ceased to be used in agriculture. There is mention only of the *kholop*, who trades and performs transactions with the lord's money and on his behalf.

There is yet another novelty in the *Extensive Pravda*—the mention of free *smerds*. The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* mentions only dependent *smerds*, listing them among the *chelyad* side by side with the slave and the *ryadovich*, while the *Extensive Pravda* adds that there are *smerds* who come under state jurisdiction. In the article on cattle, following a detailed evaluation of various kinds of domestic animals, there is a final phrase which reads: "These are dues established for the *smerds*, if they pay *prodazha* to the prince."<sup>1</sup> By singling out the *smerds*, who had not yet lost their legal rights, the article underscores the existence of yet another category of *smerds*, whose *prodazha* is paid by their master. This category of *smerds* is dealt with in Art. 90 of the *Extensive Pravda*.<sup>2</sup>

The system of economy in the demesne in the period of the *Russkaya Pravda* can be reconstructed to some extent from all the parts of *Pravda* and from odd reports in the chronicles and other sources.

In the *Pravda* the demesne as a whole is called *dom*.<sup>3</sup> The lord's court is its centre (this is called the *knyazh*

<sup>1</sup> „Правда Русская“, Учебное пособие, М.—Л. 1940, Троицкий список, ст. 45 и примечание на стр. 63. (*Pravda Russkaya*, Reader, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, Troitsk Copy, Art. 45 and Note on p. 63.)

<sup>2</sup> "If a *smerd* dies, what is left after him goes to the prince."

<sup>3</sup> The term *dom* in the sense of demesne is used in other sources as well: "The *dom* of Our Saviour"; "the *dom* of St. Sophia," "the Church *dom* of the Virgin Mary," etc.



*dvor* in the princely demesne). The children call it *otchy*, father's court. It consists of a keep and various outhouses. The more opulent the court, the more servants there are in it. Outside the bailey stand the huts of the peasant *smerds*, *ryadovichy* and *kholops*. Beyond these lie the fields which are cultivated by the *smerds*, *zakup ryadovichy* and *kholops*, partly for the lord and partly for themselves. The lord's direct participation in the affairs of his demesne is quite evident in spite of the existence of a numerous administrative staff. This is apparently due to the small size of the lord's holding. The food produced in the demesne is sufficient for the upkeep of the lord's family and his servants. There was no incentive for developing the economy of the demesne because agricultural products had not as yet become a commodity of appreciable importance. Corn did not play any perceptible part on the market which was too small to make the landowners extend their agricultural activities.

The isolation of the lord's economy and the prevalence of *corvée* are evident. The *chelyad* produces all the lord requires under his personal supervision and under the threat of physical coercion. Even the *smerd*, an owner of the means of production, is equated with the *ryadovich* and the *kholop* at his master's will when he goes among them. This is a phenomenon indicative of a transition period. The entire demesne system retains strong ties with olden times, when the system was taking shape and *kholop* labour was prominent.

But it should be remembered that the inclusion among the *chelyad* of the *smerd*, a peasant who owns the means of production, signifies the break-up of the old system of exploitation. This is obviously a transition from primitive *corvée* to rent in kind, i.e., a great advance which eventually also resulted in political changes.

To complete the picture of the demesne we should mention the presence of handicraft and sometimes even hired labour. It is clear that the needs of the lord of the manor were not limited to agriculture, which itself required the

help of the handicraftsman: neither the lord nor the peasant could do without the blacksmith. The lord's requirements in clothing, foot-wear and utensils, often of a highly refined nature, could not be satisfied without the services of a tailor, boot-maker, carpenter and silversmith. The handicraftsman was often locally trained and was one of the *kholops*. But not so as a rule. The landowner often had to solicit the services of freemen who did custom work. This obviously also meant having relations with the *gorod*, a fact of which mention, though scant, is made in the written sources. The earliest *Russkaya Pravda* speaks of a "recompense" to a physician, while the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* names a carpenter's fee for the repair of a bridge.<sup>1</sup> The *Court Law for the People*, which is not of Russian origin, but was highly popular in Rus, mentions the tailor's fee for custom work: "And if the tailor spoils the coat, whether through lack of skill or out of spite, he shall be beaten and deprived of his fee."<sup>2</sup> The labour of the *ratai* and the shepherd are also mentioned: "And if the *ratai* does not plough full time and goes away, he shall be deprived of his share. The same for the shepherd who tends the flock." It is quite possible that the *ratai* works *ispolu* and is deprived of his share of the harvest if he stops work before the end of the term, similar to the ploughman in the *Pskov Court Deed*. It may well be that the shepherd is in similar circumstances deprived of his share of the offspring.

Another such figure is mentioned by one of the articles of the *Church and Civil Regulations*, apparently of Rus origin. "If a man or woman hire himself or herself in hard times they need not take the oath. But if they leave, they shall pay three *grivnas* and their services shall remain unpaid." The *Church and Civil Regulations* speak of one engaged for a definite period during which he is depend-

<sup>1</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Academic Copy, Arts. 2 and 43.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 481; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 503.



ent on the master and has no right to leave. He is fined and deprived of his wages for services already performed, if he leaves before the end of his term. This can only be interpreted as a hire contract in the feudal sense. A similar situation is described in the *Politsa Statute*. It contains a special section entitled "Law on Hire." (Art. 93.) It falls into two parts: 1) the old law and 2) the new law. The former is worded as follows: "Whosoever hires labour of any kind and for whatever price and work, for a year or for a lesser term, the old law requires: if the hired labourer leaves before the end of his term without good reason, the hirer is free to pay him nothing. But if the hirer discharges the hired before the end of the term without good reason he must pay him in full." According to the old law a man therefore not only hired out his labour but also to some extent became dependent on the hirer. This is a purely feudal feature. The new law did away with the feudal elements and instituted pure hire. But as late as the 15th and even the 18th centuries there was more confidence in Politsa in the feudally dependent worker than the free hired hand. Art. 78c contrasts the dependent *kmet* with the hired hand: "If he (the *kmet*) robs his master he answers with his head and property; and whosoever robs the master who hires him shall pay twofold." The free hired labourer still enjoyed little confidence. The Politsa feudal lords preferred to deal with people whom they held in fee.<sup>1</sup>

The infrequency of personal hire in Kiev Rus is fully understandable. It should be remembered that we are not dealing with a society based on hired labour, but with a society in which the primitive exploitation of man by man entailing the assimilation of man himself (slavery) gradually gives way to exploitation based on the appropriation by the ruling class of the main conditions of labour, namely land, which subsequently leads to serfdom.

The population of Kiev Rus was so accustomed to being

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<sup>1</sup> B. D. Grekov, *Politsa*, pp. 113-14.

exploited through coercion by their rulers that it did not believe that its labour would be paid for even when such pay was unquestionably stipulated. In *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times* Solovyov tells of such a case during the construction of the Church of St. Georgy in Kiev. The working people would not go to work for fear of not getting their wages. When Prince Yaroslav asked his *tiun* why so few workers were engaged, the latter answered: "This is a business of the authorities (the feudal lords—*Author*) and the people fear that they will not be paid their hire after the work is done." Thereupon the prince ordered *kunas* to be brought in carts under the arch of the Golden Gate and an announcement to be made in the market-place that every worker would be paid a *nogata* per day for his work, i.e., 35 kopeks of silver, in the currency of the second half of the 19th century.<sup>1</sup> This was considered a good wage in the 11th century and the people of Kiev turned out to work in great numbers.<sup>2</sup>

Being aware of this practice of extra-economic coercion, the Church apparently found it necessary in its regulations to recommend the clergy to abstain from resorting to force in the search for labour. The following counsel is contained in the precepts issued in connection with the appointment of a new priest in the mid-13th century: "Build thy house in truth, without coercion, and do not force the poor to work for thee without their consent."<sup>3</sup> The enactment of the Vladimir Congress of 1274 said: "And he who . . . coerces the poor either to harvest or make hay or cart, etc." The poor in this article are obviously those who are capable of work but are unable of managing a holding of their own and are forced in this case to seek refuge in the Church. It is noteworthy that the Congress describes the use of their labour as "coercion," apparently

<sup>1</sup> Based on N. Aristov's calculations. *Н. Аристов, Промышленность древней Руси*, СПб 1866, стр. 282. (N. Aristov, *Industry in Kiev Rus*, St. Petersburg, 1866, p. 282.)

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *op. cit.*, p. 245, Note 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Russian Historical Library*, Vol. VI, p. 105.



mindful of commonplace contemporary facts. We find a "mendicant" in the employ of a scribe at a monastery somewhat later. A purchase deed of the Kirill Belozersky Monastery dating to the period from 1435 to 1447 bears the inscription: "This deed was written by mendicant Ilya."<sup>1</sup>

We are here concerned not only with the legal status of the person selling his labour, but also with the circumstances under which a commodity of this kind could appear on the market. It is patent that nature does not produce owners of money and commodities, on the one hand, and on the other, of labour power alone. These are specific social relations not to be found in every historical period.

We should not be dismayed, however, by the existence of hired labour in a society based mainly on serf labour and survivals of domestic slavery. Hired labour is unquestionably an indication of capitalist relations. The scattered facts pointing to its existence in ancient times by no means disprove our conceptions regarding the prevalence of non-capitalist social relations at the time. In the period under examination, hired labour had absolutely no basis for any perceptible development. I note its existence only because there is mention of it, albeit scant, in our source-material.

The demesne was not immutable. The lord of the manor, flourishing economically and politically with the aid of the state, increased his holding by extending his authority over vast expanses of land and the people on it. This, naturally, required coercion, both by the state and the nobility. Aided by their armed retinue and abetted by the state, the large landowners cease to be mere masters and gradually become sovereigns in their relations to the people liv-

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<sup>1</sup> Н. Н. Дебольский, Гражданская дееспособность по русскому праву до конца XVII века, СПб 1903, стр. 367. (N. N. Debolsky, *Civil Capacity Under Russian Law up to the End of the 17th Century*, (St. Petersburg, 1903, p. 367.)

ing on the lands they had assimilated. The demesne is turned into a seignior.

The seignior did not know all his subjects. Only very seldom did he have occasion to beat them personally, for "good reason" or not. The functions of coercion were taken over by the strengthened apparatus of the state, of which the seignior became a part.

I may be reproached for not always citing facts illustrating process described above. It is indeed well-nigh impossible to find facts pertaining to every stage of the transformation of the demesne into the seignior. Nevertheless, conclusions are justified because we are sure of two basic facts: we have a fair idea of the economy of the demesne in the period of the *Russkaya Pravda* with its exploitation mainly through precapitalist corvée, and a rather better idea of boyar and church economies of the mid-15th century with their clear-cut systems of exploitation of peasant bondmen through quitrent.

In geometry two points determine the direction of a straight line. This is also the case in the history of the demesne, where two known stages of its development determine the course of its evolution.

Finally, the sources tell us of the trends among the nobility of the *Russkaya Pravda* period which finally resulted in the state of the economy described in the scriptures of the 15th century.

They tell us of the aspirations of the rich, "who add house to house and village to village," to increase their wealth and extend their landholdings. This obviously signifies a transition to a new form of exploitation of the *smerd* bondmen (rent in kind) as the only possible course under the circumstances, since an intensive economy was beyond the powers of the boyar of the period from the 10th to the 12th centuries. It can be safely said that the *Extensive Pravda* reflects the period of transition from primitive corvée to rent in kind with the lord's income derived



mainly from the *smerd* who has a holding of his own but is forced to share the fruits of his labour with the rulers.

This is fairly well illustrated by the 1150 *Statutes* of the Smolensk Prince, Rostislav Mstislavich, whom we find donating a number of his manors to the bishopric he is setting up in Smolensk: "The Drosenskoye manor with *izgois* and land ... and Yasenskoye manor with the bee-keeper and land and *izgois* ... the Moishinskaya land in the Pogonovichy ... and the Nimikorskaya Lake with meadows... and a vegetable patch with the gardener and his wife and children, and beyond the river the fowler with his wife and children."<sup>1</sup> Besides the gift of land, the prince transfers to the bishopric the right to collect tithes from the Smolensk *pogosts* and the dues from the Smolensk *gorods*. He also gives the bishop "*proshcheniks*<sup>2</sup> with honey and *kunas* and with the *vira* and *prodazhas*." Thus, the sources of the bishop's income fall under two heads: 1) a tithe of the princely tributes plus the *gorod* dues; 2) land and people. The latter differ in social status: a) *izgois*, undoubtedly serfs adscript to land and master; and b) *kholops* (the bee-keeper, the gardener and the fowler). The *izgois* apparently till the soil. Every one of the *kholops* mentioned has his own profession. The *proshcheniks* pay quitrent in honey and money. The fact that *viras* and *prodazhas* are imposed on them for offences indicates that they are not entirely deprived of civil rights, but at the same time it is said: "And they shall be judged by no man," meaning, of course, no man of the prince. As a result of the grant they pass under the jurisdiction of the bishop who holds court not as a church dignitary but as a lord of the manor.

The resultant picture is rather complicated. One is able to note familiar features in the demesne of the Smolensk bishop, because every large estate was at the time organized on similar lines, while the terminology denoting the

<sup>1</sup> *Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter V, 2.—*Tr.*

various strata of the rural population was not very stable and precise.

The bishop's personal holding was worked on in both villages with the aid of *kholops* and serfs, who resembled the *smerd* bondmen, since *izgois* were not *kholops* and are described as settled farmers who work not only for the bishop but also for themselves, i.e., they also have personal holdings. I reach this conclusion through a negative proposition: the *izgoi* in this case is not a *kholop*, nor a *zakup ryadovich*, nor yet a *vdach*.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he is adscript to land and lord. Who is he then but a serf ploughman akin in social status to the *smerd* bondman, or the West-European *servus*?<sup>2</sup>

A separate examination of every category of producer in the holding of the feudal lord will give a much more concrete picture of the structure of a large demesne, whether princely, boyar or church.

It is clear that we shall have to start our survey by deciphering the term *chelyad* used by the earliest *Russkaya Pravda*.

### *Chelyad*

The ancient term *chelyad* is used by the earliest *Russkaya Pravda* to denote all the population working for the lord of the manor. It is used by the chronicles and by a

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V, 2.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> Presnyakov reached a different conclusion. "On the one hand," he writes, "the sources do not speak of the *smerds* as living on princely land, and on the other, the sources dealing with princely courts and manors, and donative land deeds to the clergy do not mention *smerds* on princely lands." (A. E. Пресняков, Княжое право в древней Руси, СПб 1909, стр. 286. [A. Y. Presnyakov, *Princely Right in Ancient Rus*, St. Petersburg, 1909, p. 286.]) The author's first remark contradicts the evidence of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, which refers to *smerds* on the princely demesne. It is true that they are not directly mentioned in the donative deeds to the clergy. The section of the Smolensk deed which speaks of the *pogosts* obviously implies non-serf *smerds*. It appears that the serf *smerds* of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* correspond to the *izgois* of the Smolensk deed. What I am concerned with at the moment is not the *smerd* himself but the way the large demesne was organized. More will be said about the *smerds* later.



number of private legal and literary documents which have been preserved.

Unfortunately, these documents are not anterior to the 10th century, while the *chelyad* is a much earlier phenomenon.

On the basis of our sources we may speak of *chelyad* only in the period from the 9th to the 13th centuries (and it may be in the 8th as well, since the earliest *Pravda* deals with that period). The 13th century is the time when the *chelyad* begins to disappear. If we delve into the meaning of the term we shall possibly discover the components of this complex and obscure phenomenon.

The word *chelyad* has always been regarded as one of the prime objectives of historical research, but it should be said that the bourgeois scholars who understood it correctly failed to draw the obvious conclusions. Not many Soviet scholars have concentrated on this term in recent years, and for various reasons most were unable to make use of one of the most important and meaningful concepts which so often occurs in our antiquity. Later I shall return to an examination of the literature on the subject; at the moment I wish to examine our sources.

The term *chelyad* is common in the *Russkaya Pravda*. There are two articles in the earliest *Pravda*—the 11th and the 16th—which mention the *chelyad*: "If a *chelyad* hides at a Varangian's or a Kolbyag's, and is not discovered within three days, but they shall find him on the third, the owner shall have his *chelyad* and be paid 3 *grivnas* for the offence." (Art. 11.) "He who wishes to take his *chelyad* having found him, must take the *chelyad* to the man from whom he was bought, that one shall go to the second, and when they come to the third, then say to the third: give me back my *chelyad*, and you claim your money with a witness." (Art. 16.)

Art. 17 says: "If a *kholop* assaults a freeman and runs into the keep, and the lord refuses to give him up, the *kholop* shall not be taken, but his master shall pay 12

*grivnas* for him; and after that wherever the offended freeman should find him, he shall be allowed to beat him."

These articles of the earliest *Pravda* are paralleled by similar articles in the *Extensive Pravda*.

Art. 32 of the Troitsk Copy, entitled "*Chelyad*," says: "If a *chelyad* runs away and this is proclaimed in the market-place, and he is not found within three days, but is discovered on the third, his master shall take his *chelyad* and the other shall pay three *grivnas* of *prodazha*." Art. 38, entitled "Proof of Abduction of a *Chelyad*," reads: "He who recognizes his stolen *chelyad* and catches him, shall lead him to the third defendant, and from this last take the latter's *chelyad* instead of his own, and give him the *chelyad* he recognized, and lead him to the last defendant, for he is no animal and it cannot be said in his presence: 'I know not from whom I bought him,' but he shall go to the last defendant on the testimony of the *chelyad*; and when the first thief is found, the *chelyad* shall be returned and the third defendant shall get his *chelyad* back also. The thief shall pay the loss to the owner, while the prince shall be paid 12 *grivnas* of *prodazha* both for the theft of the *chelyad* and for his abduction."

The *chelyad* is mentioned by the *Extensive Pravda* in two other cases. The article dealing with the wardship over the property of minors declares that the guardian is responsible for the property of his wards. Every profit derived by the guardian from the property of his pupils legally belongs to him, with the exception of "the offspring of the *chelyad* or cattle." (Art. 99, Fourth Troitsk Copy.) Finally, there is Art. 107 which deals with court fees and specifies nine *kunas* in a case involving the freeing of a *chelyad*.

In these parallel articles the term *chelyad* is used consistently, and there is not a single instance when *kholop* or slave is used instead. The same can be said of the articles which deal with *kholops*, where only the terms *kholop* and slave are used.



The article on the *kholop* who had assaulted a freeman contained in the earliest *Pravda* corresponds to Art. 65 of the *Extensive Pravda* with only a few additional explanations relating to a later period: "And if a *kholop* assaults a freeman and runs into the keep, and the lord refuses to give him up. . . . Yaroslav ruled that he should be killed, but his sons after his death ruled that *kunas* should be paid. . . ." (Art. 65 of the Fourth Troitsk Copy.) Art. 2 of the same *Pravda* in fact abolishes the death penalty for murder and establishes a fine in *kunas*.

Later on the *Extensive Pravda* considers various aspects of the *kholop* system, but it also is consistent in its terminology. It speaks of *kholop* thieves who, it says, may belong to prince, boyar or monk. (Art. 46.)<sup>1</sup> Art. 63 speaks of an *obel kholop* who had stolen a horse. Art. 64 points out that a *zakup* thief is turned into an *obel kholop*. Art. 66 is not very definite about the fact that the *kholop* cannot be a witness, since Art. 85 cites a case when the *kholop* does serve as a witness and definitely states that the *kholop* and the slave are not covered by the *vira*. (Art. 89.) The same *Pravda* tells of the sources of *kholopage* (Arts. 110-121) and of various instances relating to *kholop* fugitives and the search for them. (Arts. 112-121.)

A careful study of the use of the term *kholop* in the *Pravdas* leads us to conclude that there are different kinds of *kholops* and that the term *kholop* is not always synonymous with slave.

While *Russkaya Pravda's* differentiation between the terms *kholop*, *obel kholop* and *chelyad* emphasizes that the terms *chelyad* and *kholop* are not identical and warns us against hasty conclusions, the *Metropolitan's Justice*, a digest of various sources, which includes several articles of the *Russkaya Pravda* adapted to the social relations of the 13th century, does this with greater insistence and

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<sup>1</sup> There is no mention of the *smerd*.

gives food for serious thought. I have in mind Arts. 27, 28 and 29.

Art. 27: "And if a hireling *chelyad* declares in court that he does not wish to continue the master (the text is obviously spoiled, and should read "with the master") there shall be no offence, but he shall repay the earnest money twofold, but if he runs away from his master, he shall be delivered to him for good."

Art. 28: "And if the master kills a full *chelyad*, there is no murder, but his only offence is against God."<sup>1</sup> Art. 29: "But if it is a hireling *zakup*, then there is murder."

This interesting document has only recently been discovered, but it has already attracted the attention of contemporary scholars: Yushkov, Argunov and I have had recourse to it.<sup>2</sup>

It should be admitted, however, that the authors mentioned interpret the part of the text in question on the *zakups* quite differently. Leaving aside our differences for the moment, I wish to stress that the *Metropolitan's Justice* clearly shows that the term *chelyad* is much more complex than is generally supposed. There is manifest mention of two kinds of *chelyad*: the hired *chelyad* and the full *chelyad*.

I think that the hired *chelyad* is in fact a *zakup*, and that this is what Art. 29 of the *Metropolitan's Justice* says when it calls the hired *chelyad* a hireling *zakup*.

Yushkov and Argunov do not agree with this interpretation. Commenting on Arts. 27 and 28, Yushkov says: "Special attention should be paid to Art. 28 which enables us to determine whether or not Sergeyevich was right in identifying the *zakups* with the hirelings. The meaning of the article in question is that *zakups* and hirelings are two

<sup>1</sup> I think that Arts. 28 and 29 have been split without sufficient reason and should be united.

<sup>2</sup> See also Л. В. Черепнин, Русские феодальные архивы XIV-XV веков, ч. 2, М. 1951, стр. 3, 6, 25-29, 375. (L.V. Cherepnin, *Russian Feudal Archives of the 14th-15th Centuries*, Part 2, Moscow, 1951, pp. 3, 6, 25-29, 375.)



different institutions."<sup>1</sup> This view is supported by Argunov,<sup>2</sup> who writes: "In the final section we find the articles dealing with the hireling and with the *zakup*." He interprets Art. 29 in his own way and punctuates the sentence accordingly: "but if it is a *zakup*, or a hireling, then there is murder" (see p. 210). He reaches this conclusion by taking the "or" in the original text to mean a differentiation of terms and not their identification. In support of this he cites several instances from the text where it is used in that sense.

But Argunov should have considered these parts of the text where the "or" is used in a different sense. Arts. 28 and 29 should be taken as an entity, since they are indivisible both logically and grammatically. Art. 29 has no predicate: it was left in Art. 28 through a whim of the publisher. An unbiased approach to the text will make its meaning quite clear: "And if a master kills a full *chelyad*, there is no murder . . . but if it is a hireling or *zakup*, then there is murder. . . ." The author of the text did not wish to repeat the predicate twice in the same sentence. He uses the "or" in the conditional sentence to show that "if he kills" applies to the two objects being contrasted. ("But if it is a hireling *zakup* [he kills] then there is murder.") I believe that this is the simplest and most natural interpretation of the text. Far from contradicting the facts at our disposal, it fully corresponds to them: the full *chelyad* in this case, as elsewhere in the sources, is contrasted with the hireling *zakup*, or the *zakup* hireling. The hireling *zakup* of the *Metropolitan's Justice* is also to be found in the *Russkaya Pravda*, where these words are used as synonyms.

This does not mean, however, that I support Sergeye-

<sup>1</sup> *Letopis Zanyatii Arkheograficheskoi Komissii* for 1927-28, Issue 35, Leningrad, 1929, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> П. А. Аргунов, О закупах Русской Правды („Известия Академии наук," отд. общественных наук, № 10, 1934, стр. 792). (P. A. Argunov, *The Zakups of "Russkaya Pravda."* *Izvestia Akademii Nauk, otdelenie obshchestvennykh nauk*, No. 10, 1934, p. 792.)

vich's conclusion that the *zakup* is a hireling. I have no doubt that Sergeyevich was in essence wrong in identifying the *zakup* with the hireling, since he interpreted the hireling as a hired labourer in the capitalist sense of the word.<sup>1</sup> But he was formally right, since the hireling and the *zakup* are equated by the *Russkaya Pravda* itself: "And if the master sells the *zakup* free of debt, the hireling is free to dispose of all his *kunas*..." (Art. 61, Fourth Troitsk Copy.) The hireling in this case is obviously someone very different to what Sergeyevich imagined him to be.

Thus, the *Metropolitan's Justice* does not speak of three objects (the full *chelyad*, the hireling *chelyad* and the hireling *zakup*) but only of two (full *chelyad* and hireling *chelyad* or the hireling *zakup*). This hireling *chelyad* who had received a *kupa* is implied also in Art. 27 of the *Metropolitan's Justice*: "And if a hireling *chelyad* declares in court ..." that he does not wish to remain with his former master, he has every right to leave him by refunding a double sum of earnest money, which was obviously doubled so that the master should retain the labourer. If he runs away from his master, he is turned into a *kholop*. There is absolutely nothing new here as compared with Art. 56 of the *Russkaya Pravda*, Troitsk Copy: "If a *zakup* runs away from his master, he becomes a full *kholop*; and if he goes in search of *kunas*, but it proves that he has openly gone either to the prince or to the judges to complain against his master, he shall not be punished, but shall be given justice." The *Metropolitan's Justice* describes this *zakup* in the court to which he applies to abrogate his relations with his master. The terminology of these two documents, which are closely allied in origin, is identical, and, I believe, beyond question. Both sources speak of the slave and the *zakup*, and the

<sup>1</sup> "In our day, hired labourers often get their wages in advance, the same was the case in olden times." (See V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. I, p. 191.)



*Metropolitan's Justice* regards the slave and the *zakup* as being two species of the generic *chelyad*.

This explanation is of the utmost importance, and I agree with Yushkov's remark in his introduction to the *Metropolitan's Justice*, in which he says: "First of all, it becomes clear that we are not to identify the *chelyad* with the *kholop*, as has been done to this day. It appears that there were full *chelyad* and hireling *chelyad*."<sup>1</sup> This is, of course, very true, but requires clarification.

There is much interesting information on this subject in bourgeois literature. Here is what Vladimirsky-Budanov has to say: "Linguistic facts indicate that the earliest origins of slavery are connected with family law. The word *semya* (according to Vostokov's dictionary) means slaves, domestics. . . . *Chelyad* (*chad*, *chado*<sup>2</sup>)<sup>3</sup>, slave (*robya*, *robenets*, child), *kholop* (Ukrainian: *khlopets*—boy, son) are equally used to denote persons under paternal authority and slaves."<sup>4</sup>

Sergeyevich held that "*chelyad*, *chad*, and *chado* had one and the same root and denoted domestics." He does not deal with this term later on, but in his treatment of the word *kholop* he reveals his interpretation of the term *chelyad*. The *Russkaya Pravda* does not merely speak of *kholops* in general, but also singles out *obel kholops* (Art. 110, Fourth Troitsk Copy); it often uses *obel* instead of *kholop*. "It would appear, therefore," Sergeyevich continues, "that there were absolute *kholops* and relative *kholops*. What, then, is a relative *kholop*?" he inquires, and answers as follows: "*Kholop* and *roba* . . . denoted a servant and a working woman. But freemen could also be servants and working women. Therefore, a free working woman could also be called a *roba*, and a free servant

<sup>1</sup> *Letopis Zanyatii Arkheograficheskoi Komissii* for 1927-28, Issue 35, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Chado*—child.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> The fact is that *chado* and *chelyad* have nothing in common from the philological point of view.

<sup>4</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-01.

a *kholop*." To prove this point Sergeyevich cites the 1597 ukase which speaks of "voluntary *kholopage*." "Only the *obel* or full *kholops* are bondmen, or slaves, in the full sense of the word."<sup>1</sup>

We exclude the author's reference to the 1597 ukase which applies to totally different circumstances and to another period and cannot therefore serve as an argument in support of his contention, which may be considered as proved in part. It is plausible and of some interest. His reasoning on the *kholops* should be taken into account in examining the term *chelyad*.

A similar view is held by Pogodin, who differentiated between temporary and full *kholops*.<sup>2</sup>

Samokvasov, as is often the case with him, also has a different view on this subject. "In the period of the *Russkaya Pravda*," he writes, "*slave settlements*, belonging to church bodies, princes and boyars, were called *villages*." "The chronicles speak of numerous princely, church and boyar villages in the 12th century, inhabited by *chelyad* or *chad*..." To prove this he refers to the well-known texts of the *Ipaty Annals* which speak of *chelyad*. But since he considers *chelyad* to be slaves, Samokvasov includes a part of the *smerds* in that category, because he believes that "*ploughmen in a state of bondage in the princely villages were called smerds in the narrow sense of the word in the period of the Russkaya Pravda*."<sup>3</sup> In other words, he calls the *smerds* held in fee by the feudals "*ploughmen in a state of bondage*." Thus, if we take his peculiar terminology into account, it becomes clear that he considers the *chelyad* as consisting of slaves and dependent *smerds*.

<sup>1</sup> V.I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. 1, pp. 98-100.

<sup>2</sup> М. П. Погодин, Древняя русская история до монгольского ига, т. II, М. 1871. (M. P. Pogodin, *Ancient Russian History Prior to the Mongolian Invasion*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1871.)

<sup>3</sup> Д. Я. Самоквасов, Курс истории русского права, М. 1908, стр. 282 и 286. (D. Y. Samokvasov, *A History of Russian Law*, Moscow, 1908, pp. 282 and 286.)



There is evidence that Aristov too did not always hold that the *chelyad* were slaves. Here is what he says: "The population of the princely manors consisted of *chelyad* and slaves, who sometimes numbered up to 700, for example, in Svyatoslav's manor."<sup>1</sup> Further on, however, he interprets the *chelyad* as slaves.<sup>2</sup>

Other scholars, among them Chicherin, Belyayev, Dyakonov, etc., have definitely taken *chelyad* to mean slaves.

Speaking of the sources of slavery, Chicherin indicates one of them, namely, "birth from a slave woman," and goes on to explain: "The offspring of the *chelyad*, similar to that of cattle, constitute the property of the owner."<sup>3</sup> A similar opinion is expressed by Belyayev.<sup>4</sup>

Dyakonov views the subject in a similar light. His interpretation of *chelyad* is oversimplified. He believes that *chelyad* was merely one of the names given to slaves and without any reservations classifies as slaves the 700 *chelyad* in Prince Svyatoslav's demesne in Putivl mentioned in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1146, as well as other *chelyad* mentioned in that source (for 1159).<sup>5</sup>

We then have two main views on the subject in bourgeois literature: 1) the interpretation of the term *chelyad* as slaves, and 2) its interpretation in a wider sense, including both slaves and non-slaves.

I believe the second view to be more acceptable and better substantiated, but only within a certain period.

The term *chelyad* is often mentioned in Rus written sources, both originals and translations. The earliest trans-

<sup>1</sup> N. Aristov, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 184, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Б. Н. Чичерин, Опыт по истории русского права, М. 1858, стр. 146. (B. Chicherin, *Essays on the History of Russian Law*, Moscow, 1858, p. 146.)

<sup>4</sup> И. Д. Беляев, Крестьяне на Руси, М. 1903, стр. 14. (I. D. Belyayev, *Peasants in Rus*, Moscow, 1903, p. 14.)

<sup>5</sup> М. А. Дяконов, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, pp. 84, 111, 115, etc.

lations of the Gospels and the Bible, some of which are contemporary to the *Russkaya Pravda*, and are rendered with the utmost care and precision, are particularly indicative of this.

The *chelyad* mentioned in the 1119 *Yury Gospel According to St. Luke* (12, 42), corresponds to the Greek *οικονομία*: "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his *chelyad*, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" In the *Vulgate* the term *chelyad* is rendered by *familia*, and in the Russian translation of the Gospel "over his servants."

This text is slightly altered in the *Gospel According to St. Matthew* (24, 45) but there, too, the Greek term *οικονομία* which has as variants *οικία οίκουσία* is rendered into the Slav as *dom* and servants, *Dienerschaft*, in German.

*Genesis*, Chapter 35, Verse 6 in a 14th-century copy of the Bible reads: "So Jacob came to Luz which is in the Land of Canaan, he and all the *chelyad* that were with him." This *chelyad* is used to denote the Greek *λαός* or the Latin *populus*. It corresponds to the Old Hebrew *om* (people): and "all his *chelyad*" was a translation of the Hebrew: all the people (*om*) who were by him (or with him). In *Exodus* we read: "And the children of Israel journeyed from Ramesses to Succoth, about 600,000 on foot that were men, besides *chelyad*." (*Exodus*, 12, 37, 14th-century copy). In a 1900 edition of the Bible the term *chelyad* was substituted by the word "household" which is *πλῆθὺν τῆς οἰκουμένης* in Greek, and *apparatum* in Latin. The Old Hebrew is *tof*, i.e., children, hence the words "besides *chelyad*" correspond to the Hebrew "besides children."

The term *chelyad* as used in the treaties with the Greeks did not necessarily denote only slaves.

"If a Rus *chelyad* is stolen or runs away or is sold by force and the Rus complain, this shall be stated by the *chelyad*, and he shall be taken to Rus; but the merchants also if they kill a *chelyad* and complain they shall search



for the lost one and take him. And he who shall prevent such search shall infringe his law."<sup>1</sup>

I doubt whether this text refers only to slaves brought to Constantinople for sale. It is more probable that the reference is to menials, including slaves, who accompanied their masters on the long journey. The law protects them from forcible sale which when it takes place is testified to by the *chelyad* himself. When a *chelyad* is returned from a forcible sale or from flight he is sent to Rus. This is stressed twice. These servants may well have included both slaves and non-slaves. In Ancient Rus there must have been cases of the illegal sale of *zakups*,<sup>2</sup> i.e., non-slaves, and possibly of other classes of the population.

In any case, that part of the treaty quoted above does not warrant the flat assertion that the term *chelyad* denoted slaves only. Unfortunately, we do not know what the corresponding word in the Greek copy of the treaty was, whether it was *θεράτεια*, *ἀποστρέυη* or one of those used in the Gospels and the Bible.

The non-slaves among the *chelyad* are singled out in that part of the *Precepts of Vladimir Monomakh* where he tells of the punitive expedition against the Minsk Prince Gleb: "We captured the *gorod* (Minsk—*Author*) and left neither *chelyad* nor cattle." He means to say that nothing at all was left in Minsk. It is highly improbable that Vladimir Monomakh and his warriors were able to differentiate between slaves and non-slaves in the heat of the battle. Obviously a part of the population was killed and the rest taken into captivity regardless of social status.<sup>3</sup>

Prince Gleb with whom Vladimir Monomakh waged war acted in a similar way. The latter says that Gleb seized

<sup>1</sup> The 911 Treaty, Art. 12. The 944 Treaty speaks of the flight of a *chelyad* "from St. Mama, i. e., from a suburb of Constantinople where the visiting Rus lived with their servants. (Art. 3.)

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Karamzin Copy, Art. 61.

<sup>3</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 239; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 160.

his men<sup>1</sup>; Vladimir recaptured them. These could also be called *chelyad*. During their feudal wars the princes sometimes returned the *chelyad*. Describing the armistice that followed the war waged by Vladimir and the Volyn Prince, Vladimir Vasilkovich, with the Polish Prince Kontrat in 1279, the chronicler writes: "Vladimir made peace and there was great friendship among them. Vladimir also returned him the *chelyad* which he had captured by force of arms."<sup>2</sup> Although this happened later, the practice here described in no way differs from the earlier exchanges of people captured in war.

An event which is very popular among our scholars—the agreement of the princes at the Uvetichy Congress—is described in the chronicle for the year 1100. After an internecine war, the princes Svyatopolk, Vladimir, David and Oleg met at Uvetichy and offered peace to Volodar and Vasilyok on terms which included the return of *kholops* and *smerds* ("and our *kholops* and *smerds* both of you shall return").<sup>3</sup> It is easy to guess how their *kholops* and *smerds* fell into the hands of Volodar and Vasilyok. The *chelyad* whom the recently-warring princes now offering peace wished to have returned to them were captives. "And Volodar and Vasilyok did not agree to this," i.e., they did not return the captive *kholops* and *smerds*.

There was a similar event somewhat later, when Prince Vladimir Vasilkovich of Volyn appealed to the Polish Prince Lestek "that he return his *chelyad*", but the latter did not return him his *chelyad*"<sup>4</sup> (1282). Yet another case is reported during the first half of the 11th century: "At this time (1043) Yaroslav gave his sister away in marriage to Casimir, and Casimir gave as dowry 800 people, whom Boleslav captured when he defeated Yaroslav."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lawrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 241; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 581.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 586.

<sup>5</sup> *Lawrenty Annals* for 1043; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 104.



Comparing the texts quoted above, we find that the term *chelyad* denotes both *kholops* and *smerds*.

The capture of *chelyad* did not signify the seizure of slaves only. But all categories of the population taken prisoner thereby became *chelyad*, among whom were slaves and non-slaves. Accounts in the annals dealing with the capture of prisoners confirm our opinion that *chelyad* were not merely slaves.<sup>1</sup>

It would scarcely be correct to interpret the term *chelyad* as used in the well-known donative deed of Prince Gleb's wife to the Pechera Monastery to mean slaves. It reads: "The princess bequeathed five villages with *chelyad* and gave away everything even unto the last thread" (1158).<sup>2</sup> The chronicler wishes to emphasize that the princess gave the monastery everything she had. It is therefore unlikely that she had singled out all the non-slaves in these five villages and transferred them elsewhere before donating the villages with the *chelyad* to the monastery. It would be more logical to interpret this account in the sense the chronicler wished to convey. The princess gave away all her possessions including her villages with their entire population, among whom there could have been both slaves and *smerds* held in fee.

I believe that the 700 *chelyad* in Prince Svyatoslav's Putivl demesne should be viewed in a similar light.<sup>3</sup>

These are 11th and 12th century facts. The *chelyad* involved are mainly a part of the population held in fee by the landlord and directly engaged on his land and exploited by him in corvée or in various other capacities, including military service in the lower ranks of his retinue. The entire mass of people living in the manors and held in fee was sometimes called *chelyad*. I do not insist that the word *chelyad* was not used at times to

<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, pp. 572, 584-85.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

denote a *kholop*, but at this time the term *kholop* itself was rather complicated.

Going back into the past from the time of the *Russkaya Pravda* we may safely interpret *chelyad* as *familia*, the οἶκος of that period, when side by side with the lord and lady of the manor and their daughters we find patriarchal male and female slaves, who performed the household work and were under the authority of the *patris familias*.

A hint that *chelyad* had once denoted *familia* is to be found in survivals. In the 17th century the term *chelyadok* was used to denote "son."<sup>1</sup> But the period of this *familia* is only partially reflected in our written sources.

In short, the term *chelyad* in our sources does not denote any single category of dependent people. The history of social relations from ancient times has been reflected in this term—as, it should be added, in many others.

*Chelyad*, *chelovek*,<sup>2</sup> *koleno* (generation), the Lithuanian *keltis*, the Latvian *cilts*, are all words of the same root which take us back into antiquity when *keltis* and *cilts* signified genus, *Geschlecht*. At a new stage of social development this term came to signify family, children among the Bulgarians, Russians, Czechs, etc.; a woman in a family and dependents in general among the Arabs; and household servants, menials, dependents, children among the Poles and the Czechs. Corresponding to *familia*, this term changed in meaning together with the development of the *familia* itself, which initially included household slaves, and with time began to include also non-slaves.

What is of paramount importance is to determine the stage of development of this institution at which it is

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<sup>1</sup> А. А. Федотов-Чеховский, Акты, относящиеся до гражданской расправы древней России, т. II, Киев 1863, стр. 407. (A. A. Fedotov-Chekhovsky, *Civil Penal Acts in Ancient Rus*, Vol. II, Kiev, 1863, p. 407.)

<sup>2</sup> *Chelovek*—man.—*Tr.*



found in the *Russkaya Pravda* and the interpretation it should be given in our earliest written sources.

The early 12th-century Gospel text which undoubtedly reflected the usage at an earlier period uses it in the sense of *θεραπεία*, i.e., chiefly non-slaves. It has two meanings in the Biblical texts according to its Old Hebrew usage: 1) people (Old Hebrew *om*, Greek *λαός*, Latin *populus*), from which slaves are excluded; and 2) domestics, (Hebrew *tof*), Greek *ἀποσκευή*, Latin *apparatum*), which could possibly include slaves.<sup>1</sup>

In some chronicle texts *chelyad* may definitely be taken to mean captives whose fate was extremely varied. It was no chance remark when Mauricius Strategicus said that the Slavs do not keep their prisoners in bondage (*ἐν δουλείᾳ*) as other peoples do. The Greek does not fail to differentiate between slaves and freemen, who include all non-slaves, i.e., not only those who are really free, but also those who are in various stages of dependency, with the exception of slaves.

It is well known that some prisoners were sold, but it is just as patent that others were ransomed and settled as serfs.<sup>2</sup>

The treaties with the Greeks stipulate the right of both parties to ransom prisoners even when they had already been sold.

Princes who captured *chelyad* often sold this commodity abroad. It is this Svyatoslav had in mind when he spoke of Pereslavl'ets on the Danube, whither "all goods are brought," "skins, and wax and honey, and *chelyad*" from Rus.

It is noteworthy that the *Extensive Pravda* does not

<sup>1</sup> The late S. A. Zhebelev helped to interpret the Greek terms corresponding to the Ancient Rus *chelyad*.

<sup>2</sup> *Lawrenty, Ipaty and Nikon Annals* for 1031: "Yaroslav and Mstislav gathered many men-at-arms and went against the Poles, and recaptured the Cherven *gorods*, and invaded the Polish land, and brought back many Poles, whom they divided among themselves; Yaroslav settled his along the Ros where they continue to live to this day."

mention captivity as one of the sources of slavery in its section on *obel kholops*, i.e., full *kholops*, slaves in the full sense of the word. It states definitely that there are only three sources of slavery: 1) purchase, 2) marriage to a slave woman without a special contract, 3) joining the *tiuns* without a special contract.<sup>1</sup> It transpires, therefore, that a prisoner as such is not yet a slave, but is already a *chelyad*, and may become a slave if sold, a practice subject to considerable reservations, as is witnessed by the treaties with the Greeks.

If our ancient written sources, mainly the *Russkaya Pravda*, draw a line of distinction between simple *kholops* and *obel kholops*, and regard only the latter as real slaves, their differentiation between *kholops* and *chelyad* is much more pronounced. This obvious need to draw a line between the *obel kholop* and the *chelyad* made the compilers of the *Russkaya Pravda* very accurate in this respect.

This leads us to infer that even if the *kholop* is included in the *chelyad*, he is not fused with it entirely and in some cases the *Pravda* considers it necessary to mention him separately.

If we have correctly interpreted *chelyad* we should be able to discover it in the *Russkaya Pravda* even where it is not specifically mentioned.

The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* which gives pertinent facts on the large feudal demesne of the 11th century does not use the term *chelyad* at all. But since it deals with the dependent producer exploited by the large landowner (in this case the prince) it cannot be imagined that the legislators could have done without the *chelyad* as a concept. The demesne of the period is just as inconceivable without the *chelyad* as a factory without workers. I think that the legislator did not forget the *chelyad* but in this particular case preferred to reveal the substance of the term by indicating its components.

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<sup>1</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 110.



Take the famous Articles 24 to 26 which read: "And the murder of the prince's *selsky starosta* and the *ratai starosta* is fined 12 *grivnas*, and of the prince's *ryadovich* 5 *grivnas*," "and of the *smerd* and *kholop* 5 *grivnas*." This is a list of the immediate producers who are under the supervision of the prince's *starostas*, representing the landowner. There is every reason to regard the former as *chelyad*, but with certain reservations. This group undoubtedly includes *kholops* as well as people held in fee by the landlord by contract (*ryad*,<sup>1</sup> hence *ryadovich*, *ryadovnik*). The *smerd* is also mentioned.

But judging from the scanty facts and obscure reports in the *Pravda*, the *smerd* was scarcely a part of the *chelyad*, as were the *kholops* and the *ryadovichy*. He could be engaged in the master's bailey, his estate and on his holding in general, but he retained his specific features as an immediate producer owning the means of production required for carrying on an individual holding of his own.

The appearance of the *smerd* among the *kholops* and those working by contract should be viewed as a threat to the existence of the *chelyad* as the basis of the lord's economy. It signified the transition to another, more progressive mode of economy and therefore to the next stage in the development of society as a whole.

The *smerd* eventually rendered the *chelyad* useless. But in the period reflected in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* the *smerd* exists in the lord's establishment side by side with the old *chelyad* and submits to the established custom for all practical purposes. Under the circumstances the *smerd* often resembled the *chelyad* which made him akin in status to the patriarchal slave.

To sum up, the term *chelyad* as used by the *Russkaya Pravda* covers every category of the lord's menials which emerged from the patriarchal *familia*. With time it was

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<sup>1</sup> *Ryad*—agreement.—Tr.

filled with a new content and began to show a tendency to disappear. In substance it is just as complex as it is important to an understanding of the social relations of the period from the 9th to the 12th centuries.

If it is more complex than the term slave as early as the 11th century and is explained by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, we should follow up its explanation and examine as fully as possible its components, namely, slaves, *ryadovichy* and dependent *smerds*.

### Slaves

Until recently the problem of slaves was not controversial among scholars studying social relations in mediaeval Rus, for slaves were well known throughout mediaeval Europe and their social status and economic role appeared to be sufficiently well established. Scholars usually confined themselves to stating that slaves had also existed in Rus and classified them as bondmen.

A number of recent papers shed new light on the history of the *kholops*.

This issue came to the foreground in the late thirties when Soviet scholars began to discuss the social system of Kiev Rus.

Following the appearance of my *Feudal Relations in the Kiev State*, in which I asserted that Kiev Rus, like certain other mediaeval European states, had bypassed the slave system, an attempt was made to present Kiev Rus as a slave-holding society.

This problem is of vital importance, and should therefore be dealt with at length.

The bourgeois "legal school" of historians had never felt this problem to be one of basic principles.

Chicherin was very explicit in his views on slavery in Ancient Rus. "The state of bondage is one of those institutions which takes root in hoary antiquity and prevails among all peoples at least during a certain period of their



existence. We find slavery in ancient times. There is no people among whom slavery has not existed in one form or another. Its beginnings are lost in obscurity. It changed with time absorbing new elements, and on the whole becoming milder with the development of philanthropic and moral principles. Every people lend it a peculiar hue of their own, depending on its character and the nature of social development." Captivity was the initial source of slavery among all peoples. But captives enjoyed a different status among different peoples. "Among the Slavs," Mauricius says, "captives were held in bondage only temporarily. . . . Real slavery appeared among us with the advent of the Varangian men-at-arms and was probably introduced by them."<sup>1</sup>

The author then examines the sources of slavery according to the *Russkaya Pravda* and other documents which have been preserved: "Captivity, marriage, loan, hire, crime, voluntary subjection—all could turn a freeman into a slave, apart from such incidental means as purchase and birth in a *kholop* state."<sup>2</sup> "The *kholop* was not regarded as a person, but as a thing, the private property of his master," "the master was held responsible for the actions of his *kholop*."<sup>3</sup> The slave is deprived of all rights. "There is only one law in favour of the *kholops*, and that is the stipulation that children begotten by the owner of a slave woman become freemen together with their mother after his death. In this case, the moral principle gained the upper hand and triumphed over the legal severity of the institution."<sup>4</sup>

Chicherin also points to the part played by *kholops* in the economy. They are largely personal servants of princes and other personages. The *kholops* were sometimes settled on the land, "but on the whole the rural popula-

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<sup>1</sup> B. N. Chicherin, *Essays on the History of Russian Law*, pp. 143-45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 149, 150.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

tion consisted of free peasants among whom *kholops* were settled as an exception."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimirsky-Budanov disagrees with Chicherin's assertion that the *kholop* was merely an object. In his opinion, "the *kholops* possessed certain rights and therefore should be studied as subjects and not as objects."<sup>2</sup> The sources of slavery were connected with family law, which led to the divergence in the status of slaves among different peoples: "The institution of slavery assumed an austere character among peoples with austere family relations; on the other hand, among those peoples where paternal authority was less stringent the slaves were treated almost as dependent members of the family. The Slavs belong to the latter." He notes the dual interpretation of the status of slaves by the sources: according to a part of these (the *Russkaya Pravda*) they are deprived of all legal rights; other sources which describe their actual status show that they have certain rights (the 1229 Treaty with the Germans which grants the legality of obligations undertaken by a *kholop*; the treaties of 1195 and 1229 deal with the honour of a slave woman).

The author sums up his views as follows: "The rights of the lords were increasingly curtailed, while slavery began to assume an increasingly mild form." Three main conditions contributed to this amelioration: 1) the comparatively mild nature of Slavonic law in general; 2) the spread of Christian precepts; 3) changes in the interests of the state.<sup>3</sup>

He confines himself to the legal aspect of the issue and does not examine the economic significance of the slaves.

Dyakonov, on the other hand, turns to the economic system of Rus in search of an explanation of the slave law itself. "*Kholop* labour was widely used in the urban and outlying baileys and in the manors which belonged

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<sup>1</sup> B. N. Chicherin, op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 400.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 404, 412-13, 415-16.



to the princes, boyars and monasteries." Dyakonov believes the *chelyad* to be slaves and classifies the *ryadovichy* ("common *kholops*") as slaves too. "The drastic laws governing the legal status of the *kholops* were considerably softened in practice and this in turn paved the way for an improvement in their legal status, a process vigorously furthered by the Christian Church."<sup>1</sup>

Sergeyevich devotes much attention to the legal status of the slave in Rus. He too regards the slave as property, but with a reservation: "The slave is a piece of property, but with certain departures from this principle in detail." He also considers the attitude of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Our ancestors could not but have been aware of the difference between property in the form of a human, and every other kind of property.

In principle, he is in agreement with other authors. However, his original and well-substantiated interpretation of Article 110 of the *Extensive Pravda* merits attention. ("And whosoever buys [some one] even for half a *grivna*, and has witnesses and pays even a *nogata* in the presence of the *kholop* himself....") In this self-sale of a *kholop* in the presence of witnesses and with payment of taxes ("pays even a *nogata*") he sees the interference of the state in the *kholop* issue and official approval of the transaction.

To this Vladimirsky-Budanov adds Art. 109 ("And these are oath dues: 30 *kunas ot golovy*") where he is inclined to interpret the expression "*ot golovy*"<sup>3</sup> as a duty

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<sup>1</sup> Dyakonov cites a commandment of Metropolitan Georgy: "And whosoever kills a *chelyad* shall atone in prayer as a robber." However, he himself notes that this "drastic rule" of Church law long remained foreign to social usage. The *Dvina Court Deed* of the late 14th century was not far removed from the *Russkaya Pravda* in this respect. The exhortations of the Church "could have scarcely had palpable results." (M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, pp. 118-19.)

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, op. cit., pp. 101, 119, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "per head."—*Tr.*

levied on a sale of a *kholop*.<sup>1</sup> The author does not consider his own reasoning and that of Sergeyevich as final, but notes that "slaves were liberated in the presence of officials." ("And he who frees a *chelyad* shall pay nine *kunas*, and to the *metelnik*<sup>2</sup> 9 *vekshas*." )<sup>3</sup> (Art. 107.)<sup>4</sup>

Kluchevsky attaches special importance to the *kholop* question in general and to its legal aspect in particular. He is concerned with the institution of *kholopage* not only because it is one of the institutions of Ancient Rus law but above all because of its impact on the history of the peasantry, since it is his conviction that "serfdom arose before the peasants became serfs and was *kholopage* in its various forms." He feels that "the origin of serfdom is a question of what was serf *kholop* law in Ancient Rus and how was this law imposed on the peasantry."<sup>5</sup>

Kluchevsky dealt with this problem repeatedly. In his article "Per Capita Taxation and the Repeal of Kholopage in Russia," he examines ancient documents dealing with *kholopage*. He recalls both the opinion of Mauricius Straticus on Slav captives and that of the Arab, Ibn Ruste, regarding the Rus who treated their slaves well. He believes, however, that these reports bear on Rus custom rather than the law which is embodied in the *Russkaya Pravda*. He discovers a gulf between custom and law in Ancient Rus: the former was mild and the latter drastic.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimírsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 411. *Reader*, Issue, 1, pp. 77-78, Note 155. But the author himself in the former paper admits that "all these indications are doubtful." (P. 411.) Tikhomirov believes such an interpretation of Art. 109 to be "dubious." (M. N. Tikhomirov, *A Study of "Russkaya Pravda"*, p. 70.)

<sup>2</sup> *Metelnik*—an assistant of the *virnik*.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> *Veksha*—a squirrel skin.—*Tr.*

<sup>4</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy.

<sup>5</sup> В. О. Ключевский, Происхождение крепостного права в России („Опыты и исследования", сб. I, П. 1919, стр. 193). (V. O. Kluchevsky, *The Origin of Serfdom in Russia. Essays and Investigations*, First Collection, Petrograd, 1919, p. 193.)

<sup>6</sup> В. О. Ключевский, Подушная подать и отмена холопства в России, там же, стр. 338. (V. O. Kluchevsky, *Per Capita Taxation and the Repeal of Kholopage in Russia*, op. cit., p. 338.)



He bases his conclusions on Ancient Rus *kholopage* mainly on the facts presented by the *Russkaya Pravda* and insists that it does not differentiate between the various types of *kholop*, but knows only one, namely, the *obel*, or full *kholop*, and that it is only later, in the 12th and 13th centuries, that the "primitive Russian *kholopage*" evolved and bondmen were subdivided into categories according to the measure of their dependence and social significance. "Then it could be said that one was more of a *kholop* than another."<sup>1</sup> He has in mind the appearance of a privileged group among the *chelyad*.

Why he dates the appearance of these *kholop* distinctions only to the 12th and 13th centuries remains unexplained, and the reader is puzzled as to what should be done with the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* which refers to *kholops* in the 10th and 11th centuries, and in which *kholop* ranks are clearly evident. The author devotes much space to the influence of the Church in ameliorating *kholop* law. "The Church effected such decisive changes in the status of the Russian *kholops* that this in itself is sufficient to list it as one of the major forces which went to create Ancient Rus society."<sup>2</sup>

To prove this bold statement the author resorts to indirect evidence which is often unconvincing. He assures us, for example, that the Church stipulated three instances when *kholops* had to be liberated without ransom: 1) a slave woman who bore children by her master was to be freed after his death together with her children; 2) a free-man who violated another's slave woman freed her by the very act; 3) a *kholop* or a slave woman who received injuries through their master's maltreatment were freed.

Kluchevsky proves the initiative of the Church in the first case on the strength of the fact that family law is generally under the jurisdiction of that institution. The

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 318.

last two cases are not adequately proved (the second case merits particular caution).

He offers a highly original explanation of *izgois*. These he believes to be *kholops* who obtain a new legal status when they become a possession of the Church: "By entering the society of church people, the *kholop* became an *izgoi*, a freedman dependent on the Church."<sup>1</sup>

I shall not attempt to give a detailed account either of his method of reasoning or of his conclusions. I wish only to underline his most important and pertinent ideas.

To return to his opinion that *kholop* law and serf law are one and the same thing. This idea is entirely unacceptable from the Marxist viewpoint of social and economic systems, since these are two different qualities. The slave is a piece of property owned by the lord, and is kept by him, has no means of production, uses his master's stock to work for him, has no obligations towards the state and is viewed as an object under civil law. But the serf has his own individual holding based on his personal labour and, due to his dependence on the lord, pays feudal rent, besides being burdened with numerous obligations to the state. It is the most numerous class of feudal society. Despite its status, it has certain possibilities of development.

Neither the slave nor the peasant, naturally, remained static: slavery was tending to disappear and the institution itself abolished. The peasant's dependence had a tendency to grow and his rights to be reduced.

Kluchevsky's error lies in his comparison of two phenomena which differ in essence but have certain points of similarity. He equates the slave fully dependent on the master with the serf of the hey-day of serfdom, when he was not fully owned by the lord. He ignores the fact that even at that time the peasant differed from the slave in economic status, that his place in social and political relations was quite different and that the history of slaves and peasants was entirely different.

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 342.



In 1915 Vladimirsky-Budanov's attempt to turn the Ancient Rus slave into a subject of law and declare him a person and not a thing was surpassed by Belyayev in his *The Kholops and Debtor-Creditor Relations in Ancient Rus Law*.

"It is accepted among historians of Russian law," he writes, "that the Ancient Rus *kholop* was an impersonal being divested of every right and that he began to acquire property and personal rights only under the influence of the Church and certain economic factors at a very early date."

This is only partially accepted by the author himself. He admits that "the Church and economic factors played a great part," but this concession is nullified by his conviction that "in principle the *kholop* never was an impersonal being divested of every right, and was initially not a thing, but a person, a subject, and not an object of law." He cites the *Extensive Pravda* and the treaties with the Germans, but ignores, for some reason, the *Brief Pravda*.

The slave "could be a subject of intricate civil transactions such as trade deals, he could act as attorney in court cases, lend and borrow money, acquire movable and immovable property, alienate immovable estate, and bequeath property." Slaves could have families,<sup>1</sup> while "slaves acting as *tiuns* were subjects of public rights and public juridical action."<sup>2</sup>

The author cites the *Extensive Pravda*, and wills and ukases of the middle and late 16th century, all of which do not, of course, add force to his argument, since the *kholop* of the 10th and 11th centuries and the *kholop* of the 16th century cannot *a priori* be identical. On the whole, generalizations embracing such extensive periods add nothing

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<sup>1</sup> П. И. Беляев, Холопство и долговые отношения в древнем русском праве ("Юридический Вестник", кн. IX, М. 1915, стр. 115). (P. I. Belyayev, *The Kholops and Debtor-Creditor Relations in Ancient Rus Law*, *Yuridichesky Vestnik*, No. 9, Moscow, 1915, p. 115.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

to our understanding of social phenomena, since they eliminate the very essence of things—their development and change, in brief, life itself.

Nevertheless, in spite of serious deficiencies, Belyayev's studies make a revision of old conceptions imperative. If the author has failed to prove the *kholop* to have been *ab initio* a subject and not an object of law, he was quite right in stressing the evolution of the *kholops*, and the internal changes which took place in *kholop* law, leading to the disappearance of the institution itself.

Among post-revolutionary studies of the subject, Yushkov's papers merit most attention, particularly a chapter entitled "The Transformation of *Kholops* into Serfs" in his book *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*.

I wish to note first of all the unquestionable truth that Rus, much like any other feudal country, was familiar with the process of the slave's transformation into a serf, i.e., serfdom, and that in our sources the term *kholop* has two meanings—the general and the specific. In the specific sense it denoted a slave (*obel kholop*) and in the general "any dependent bondman." The author then tries to describe the transformation of *kholops* into mediaeval feudal serfs: they attain a measure of economic independence, begin to own stock and "the form of their exploitation actually becomes akin to feudal rent." To prove this point the author recalls that in the 13th and 14th centuries the *kholops* had ceased to be the basic labour force in the princely economy (as well as in other large holdings), and that this was not the result of their liberation, but of their transformation into serfs (*stradniks*).

Yushkov rejects the idea that the *kholops* in Kiev Rus were kept in slave barracks. He thinks that they lived in individual homesteads with their families and cites the purchase deed of Antony the Roman, the donative deed of Varlaam of Khutynsk and the chronicler's report of the settlement of captives on the River Ros by Yaroslav the Lawgiver.



I think that Yushkov's idea that the *kholops* were becoming akin to the dependent *smerds* in legal status under the conditions outlined by him is promising.<sup>1</sup> (He denies the existence of independent *smerds*.)

It is from these correct positions that Yushkov analyses the "*Kholop Statutes*" of the *Extensive Pravda*. Assuming that the *Pravda* not only sets down the prevailing law, but also introduces much that replaces the old, Yushkov draws a very bold conclusion. "... Prior to the *Russkaya Pravda* the *kholop* was not a subject of crime. He paid no *proda-zhas*. The *kholop* could not serve as witness under any circumstances; his life was protected only by the exaction of a fine."<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda* established new standards of *kholop* law.

The most recent work on the *kholops* is that of Yakovlev. Although the author's aim was to study the *kholops* in 17th-century Muscovy he also found it necessary to touch upon the period under discussion. The first chapter of his book is entitled "The Evolution of Ancient Rus *Kholops* from the 10th to the 16th Centuries."

I shall leave aside the numerous details contained in this chapter pertaining to the *kholops* and underline his basic conclusions. He considers Rus a feudal and not a slaveholding state, a thesis which plainly indicates his stand in the current controversy.

He notes the mounting interest in the *kholop* issue in Kiev Rus, which he thinks found expression in: 1) the increasing number of regulations on the *kholops* in the *Russkaya Pravda* (the *Brief Pravda* has 6, the *Extensive*—31);

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<sup>1</sup> Yushkov tried to substantiate this contention in his chapter entitled "The Forms and Nature of *Zakup* Dependence," in which he differentiates between *obel kholops* and *kholops* in general, and classifies the *zakups* with the latter. *Zakup* "is included among the partial *kholops*." (Op. cit., p. 85.) While being in agreement with his statement that there were not only *obel kholops*, I think that it would be safer to keep to the terminology of the sources, which never call a *zakup* a *kholop*. It is possible that the term *kholop* was more loosely used unofficially.

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Yushkov, op. cit., p. 66.

2) the advanced stratification of the *kholops* already in evidence in the *Brief Pravda*: "The *kholop* is not only a commodity, but also a person..."; 3) the increasing avidity of the *kholop*-holders which began to assume "alarming proportions threatening social eruptions and upheavals," to prevent which the princes were forced to curb the violence of the *kholop*-holders; 4) the attempts of the authorities to draw a distinctive line between the free-man and the *kholop*.

Yakovlev pays tribute to the polished legal reasoning of the legislator (the prince codifier) who handled the problem.

If we consider the author's remark that "slave labour in Kiev Rus was being increasingly ousted by more progressive forms of production,"<sup>1</sup> we shall have an idea of his line of reasoning: *kholopage* is being gradually replaced by the more progressive labour of the peasant, the authorities favour this process, although the author's explanation of their motives can be only partially accepted (it was not only his fear of "eruptions and upheavals" but also economic considerations that prompted the lawgiver to curtail the growth of *kholopage*).

But the fact is that at times the author departs from this line of reasoning and we find him saying that "the entire economy of the princes and boyars of (as late as—*Author*) the appanage period was based on the *kholops*."<sup>2</sup>

The author's description of the policy of the authorities on the *kholop* issue appears to be incomplete. He thinks that the "*Kholop Statutes*" of the *Extensive Pravda* were a sharp rebuff administered by the upper strata of the slave-holding society to the liberal measures of the authorities on the *zakups* and *vdachas*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> А. Яковлев, Холопство и холопы в Московском государстве XVII в., т. I, М. — Л. 1943, стр. 18. (A. Yakovlev, *Kholops in 17th-Century Muscovy*, Vol. I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1943, p. 18.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> "This *kholop* code of *Pravda* (the "*Kholop Statutes*"—*Author*) adds to and illustrates the entire picture of the trends towards serfdom



I shall try to show (as has earlier been done by Yushkov and myself) that the "*Kholop* Statutes" were not a "counter-move" on the part of the slave-holders against the timid essays of the authorities, but were clearly intended by the latter to meet the progressive economic demands of society.

Soviet scholars have rejected the outdated conceptions of the legal school on the *kholop* issue. They approached this issue from a different angle—a fact, it should be added, which lent the problem added importance, because the understanding of practically the whole of Rus history of that period hinges on the solution of this problem.

A clear understanding of Rus's place among the other peoples of mediaeval Europe and its social relations is essential. Our interpretation of the sources will be correct only if we take into account the situation in the world as a whole.

Slavery is unquestionably the most ancient form of man's exploitation by man. At a very early date captives among all people were turned into slaves and used as labour power. But the historian of social relations cannot be satisfied with the mere mention of the existence of slavery. It is his duty to define the part played by the slave's place in the country's economy.

Urartu aside, there is a great difference between the

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in the economy of the princes, boyars and men-at-arms." (P. 21.) And on the following page: "We see a country in which the propertied classes are attempting to develop and consolidate standards conducive to 'legitimate enslavement' in the form of certain legal ritual. The princes, boyars, men-at-arms of all categories, merchants . . . strive more or less in concert to achieve a common goal—to develop, formulate and specify standards making for the enslavement of the weaker elements of society." (Op. cit., p. 22.—*Author's italics*.) On page 21 we read:

"In answer to the inconclusive articles on the *zakups* and the *vdacha* (drawn up by the princely authorities, as the text shows—*Author*) the upper layers of the slave-holding society countered with a drastic *kholop* code, unusually elaborate for the *Pravda* and the epoch as a whole, set forth in as many as fourteen articles" (*Author's italics*), giving the impression that this code was drawn up by a different authority than the one which drew up the *zakup* statutes.

status of slaves among the Romans and the so-called "barbarians." In Rome, the slave was the basis of production; among the Germans, the Slavs, the Armenians and the Iberians the slaves had never had and never could have played so large a part since these societies developed in different historical circumstances, in which the leading role in production was first played by the free labour of the peasant-member of the community and later by the selfsame peasant but already in bondage. This was a great stride forward in the history of mankind compared with ancient times.

The student of the history of Rus's rural population must bear in mind the peculiarities of the period in mankind's history during which the Rus people and state took shape, lest he lose his bearings and distort the perspective.

The ancient Slavonic patriarchal domestic slavery continued to exist in the state of Ancient Rus. We find the slave among the *chelyad*, and he is often mentioned by the treaties with the Greeks, the *Russkaya Pravda*, the chronicles and the lives of the saints. The *Life of Feodosy of Pechera*, written by Nestor in the 11th century, reveals that when he was 13 years old Feodosy, the son of a landowner of modest means, the future pillar of the Pechera Monastery, accompanied "his slaves to the village to work diligently."<sup>1</sup> The *Novgorod Annals* for 1066 tell of the strangulation of Bishop Stephan by his own *kholops*.<sup>2</sup> The son of a wealthy boyar, Varlaam, who on his father's orders was forcibly returned to his home from the Pechera Monastery, is attended by "numerous slaves." These slaves and slave women bewail his decision to return to the monastery despite the measures taken by his father to keep him at home.<sup>3</sup> Slaves toiled in the same Pechera Monastery, and

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<sup>1</sup> *The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *The Second and Third Novgorod Annals*, 1879, p. 185; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 483.

<sup>3</sup> *The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, p. 25.



when monk Vasily ground grain for the brethren day and night "the slaves' burden was lightened."<sup>1</sup>

The word "slave" as used in the lives of the saints should be considered with extreme care. The fact is that official juridical documents and the chronicles do not use the word slave (*rab*) but invariably use *kholop* (and *roba* for women).<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastical documents have a different terminology, and the word *rab* (slave) is used often and in a more general sense. It is possible, therefore, that the term "slave" in the lives of the saints may denote not only *obel kholops*, but all people dependent on the master, menials in general.

The existence of slave *kholops* belonging to the princes, boyars, the Church and monasteries is also confirmed by the *Russkaya Pravda*. Art. 46 says: "And if the thieves prove to be either princely, or boyar or monastery *kholops*, who are not punished by the prince with a *prodazha*, because they are not free...."

However, when we state this we merely prove that slaves in Kiev Rus were held by princes, boyars and the Church, which is far from sufficient for our purposes. The fact is that every social phenomenon is, firstly, a component of the whole and is connected with it in origin and function; secondly, it exists, lives, i.e., it does not remain immutable. The task of the scholar is therefore to determine: 1) the relationship of every component to its whole, in this case, the place and role of the slaves in the entire system of Rus life in the "Kiev period," and 2) to trace the changes in the status of the slaves.

The wide latitude allowed by the law in the ransom of slaves strikes the eye. As early as the 6th century Mauricius Strategicus pointed out the difference in the status of captives among the Slavs and the Greeks. The Slavs did

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> *Roba, raba*, hence *rab, robiti, rabotati, robota, rabota*—is an ancient Russian word and there is no reason to derive it from the German *Raub*, as Yakovlev does.

not turn their captives into slaves. They either gave them the right of being ransomed, or of remaining among them as freedmen, a fact which could not but astonish the Byzantine. A similar situation is found somewhat later among the Eastern Slavs, the Rus.

Art. 9 of Oleg's 911 Treaty with the Greeks, for instance, speaks of ransom in these words: "And if he be taken in battle . . . he shall be returned to his native land, in return for his price. . . ." Igor's 944 Treaty speaks of this with even greater clarity: "And as many captives from among us (the Greeks—*Author*) as are brought by Rus for ransom, and if it be a youth or a buxom maid, let 10 *zlotniks* be paid for them; and if it be a middle-aged captive, let 8 *zlotniks* be paid for him; and if he be an old man or a child, let 5 *zlotniks* be paid.

"And if a Rus is found working among the Greeks as a captive, let Rus pay 10 *zlotniks* for him, and if he was bought by a Greek the latter shall swear by the cross and be paid the price he had given for the Rus."<sup>1</sup> The treaty goes so far as to provide for a case when the captive had already been sold in which case the ransomer had to pay the sum for which he was sold, instead of the 10 *zlotniks*.

The *Judicial Law* much in use in Rus, confirms this rule: "Whosoever buys a captive from his captor. When some one buys a captive from his captors paying his own price, let the captive pay a similar price for himself and go free, or let him work it off until he is fully ransomed, if he has nothing to pay for himself on account. His pay for the year is set at 3 shillings in the presence of a witness; and when he pays his price he shall be set free."<sup>2</sup>

I underline the fact that the captive who has no hopes of being ransomed by any of his relatives may work off the ransom money, after which he is set free.

<sup>1</sup> The 944 Treaty. A. A. Shakhmatov, *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Vol. I, Petrograd, 1916, pp. 56-57. *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, pp. 478-79; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 501.



Captivity as a source of slavery has a definite tendency to diminish. Nevertheless, the ransoming of a captive, or his liberation through his working off a certain sum of money, appeared to be no easy task, and the mass of captives may possibly have passed from hand to hand as a commodity much more frequently than they were ransomed and freed.

What is important here is the principle itself, which could scarcely have been acceptable in Greek and Roman times.

There is another important side to the problem. The captive is either set free in return for a certain remuneration, or sold, mostly abroad, i.e., in both cases he is considered not so much as labour force needed by Rus, but rather as a valuable commodity which is in demand in some foreign countries.

While Greek and Roman societies tried to concentrate as many slaves as possible at home in the form of a labour force, and in this way solve their problem of reproducing the labour force, in Rus it was the reverse process: slaves were dispersed instead of being concentrated.

I do not wish to belittle the role of the slave as a labour force in the state of Ancient Rus by this comparison. I merely wish to demonstrate that the slave's place in Rus production of the 9th-11th centuries was different to that of the slave in the ancient slave-holding societies.

We know that in the 11th century captives were settled on the land and apparently turned into serfs. It would be difficult to interpret the following inscription in the *Lavrenty Annals* for 1031 otherwise: "Yaroslav and Mstislav gathered many men-at-arms and went against the Poles, and captured the Cherven *gorods*, and invaded the Polish land, and brought back many Poles, whom they divided among themselves; Yaroslav settled his along the Ros, where they live to this day."<sup>1</sup>

Of course, in the chronicler's time they lived in their own homesteads, on their own plots, with their own families. If

<sup>1</sup> *Lavrenty, Ipaty and Nikon Annals* for 1031.

they had not had families, it could not have been said some 80 or 90 years later of those who had been settled in 1031 (in their middle age) that they "live to this day." The fact that *kholops* had families, earlier pointed out by Yushkov, is confirmed both by the purchase deed of Antony the Roman and the donative deed of Varlaam of Khutynsk. ("Tudor with wife and children for ever, Volos with wife and children for ever.")<sup>1</sup>

The *Extensive Pravda* does not mention captivity in its enumeration of the sources of slavery. It says that "there are three sources of *obel kholopage*: 1) if some one buys another even only for half a *grivna*, and before a witness, and pays even if only a *nogata*, in the presence of the *kholop* himself, and not without him; 2) the second source: if someone marries a slave woman without previously drawing up a contract, but with a contract it shall stand as agreed; 3) and the third source: becoming a *tiun* without a contract, or whosoever works as a cellarer without a contract, but it shall stand even as agreed if a contract is drawn up." (Art. 110, Fourth Troitsk Copy.)

The institution of *kholopage* has evidently been placed under the control of the state. The policy the state adopted in this issue is not difficult to trace. After indicating the three sources of *obel kholopage* the *Russkaya Pravda* shows a way out of the danger: if there were no witnesses at the sale, or if the one being sold had not seen money being paid for him, he is not a *kholop*; the threat of becoming a *kholop* is eliminated if a contract is drawn up in case of marriage to a slave woman or when applying for work.

Art. 111, which follows, is a continuation of the law-giver's idea of reducing the sources of slavery: "He who receives a loan is not a *kholop*: he cannot be turned into a *kholop* either for corn or for interest; but if he does not work the agreed term he is to return what was given to

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<sup>1</sup> See M. F. Vladimírsky-Budanov, *Reader*, Issue 1, p. 133, Note 3. Even if we assume that these deeds have come down to us in a somewhat altered form, the excerpt quoted is beyond doubt whatsoever.



him in kindness; and if he works his full term, he is not guilty." It is highly possible that the government was forced to compromise with the insurgent mass and include this article in the *Pravda* following the terrible events of 1113. It is indicative not only of the appetites of the *kholop*-holders, but also of the *kholopage* policy of the authorities. The law prohibits turning a poor man into a slave for a corn debt or for interest and recommends working them off.

The statutes as a whole were drawn up with the manifest desire to prevent the spread of slavery. This proves that the *kholops* did not constitute the main labour force in the economies of the princes, the boyars or the Church.

Marital relations did serve as a source of slavery in Ancient Rus, but they show that the slave could possess a family and that the couple could evade slavery when one of them was free. The latter becomes a *kholop* only when he "takes a slave woman without a contract," "but if he takes her with a contract he remains in his state previous to the contract."<sup>1</sup> It would appear that the latter case was not a unique occurrence. The *Judicial Law for the People* which was undoubtedly also used in Rus, contains a special rule for those who "worked for a slave woman." It says: "He who works to free a slave woman, agrees on the price before a witness (that is a contract—*Author*) that both shall be freed,"<sup>2</sup> in short, it was possible to work off a sum specified in the presence of a witness by agreement with the owner of a slave woman for her release from bondage. After the death of a freeman (possibly the owner himself) his children begotten by a slave woman are freed with their mother, but do not inherit his property.<sup>3</sup>

The status of children begotten by freemen of slave women was not always much different from the status of

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<sup>1</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 479; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 501.

<sup>3</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 98.

children born of free mothers. This is what is possibly meant by the well-known story in the *Novgorod Annals* for 970 about the arrival in Kiev of "people from Novgorod asking for a prince for themselves." "If he refuses to come with us," they told Prince Svyatoslav, "we shall find one ourselves." Svyatoslav expressed his doubts as to whether "anyone would go to you." It was then that Dobrynya advised them to ask Vladimir, who, he believed, would be more pliable, considering that he was "of Malusha, Olga's housekeeper." She was Dobrynya's own sister, their father being Malk Lubechanin. Vladimir agreed. "And the Novgorod envoys took Vladimir with them, and Vladimir went with Dobrynya, his uncle, to Novgorod."<sup>1</sup> Vladimir's being the son of a slave woman, a housekeeper, did not apparently prevent him from enjoying rights similar to those enjoyed by his brothers born of free mothers. Rogneda, daughter of Prince Rogvolod of Polotsk, piqued Vladimir on his slave origin when he expressed his wish to marry her. "I do not wish to take off the boots of a slave woman's son," she said, which, it is true, did not stop Vladimir, but made him resort to force. This fact, however, underlined another aspect of the matter: the proud Rogneda unquestionably knew that a slave origin cast a shadow on a person in general, and in particular a suitor who was undesirable.

The honour of slave women is specifically protected in a special article in the 1195 Novgorod Treaty with the Germans: "And whosoever overpowers a slave woman, but does not rape her, pays one *grivna* for the shame, and if he rapes her, she becomes free."<sup>2</sup> A slave woman who has children by a freeman becomes free with her children after his death.<sup>3</sup>

We know nothing similar to these marital relations be-

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<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 21; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 121. See Shakhmatov's remarks in his *Investigations into the Earliest Rus Chronicles*, pp. 373-78.

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 98.



tween freemen and slaves in the slave-holding society of Rome, for example.

It appears that failure to fulfil one's obligations did not lead to slavery under Ancient Rus Law. It is true that some scholars disagree with this. Dyakonov thinks that bankruptcy through the fault of the merchant himself (drunkenness, dissipation) placed him at the mercy of his creditors: "If they wait, it is their will, if they sell him, it is their will." (Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 54.) In the next article we read about indebtedness in general ("He who owes to many") which results in the sale of the offender in the market-place. (Ibid., Art. 55.<sup>1</sup>) But this is probably a misunderstanding. Art. 55 of *Russkaya Pravda* (Fourth Troitsk Copy) says: "He who owes to many" and is either unwilling or unable to satisfy his creditors, should be "led to the market-place and (his property) sold and first the *kunas* shall be returned to the merchants from abroad, then the local merchants shall divide among themselves what is left of the *kunas*; if there is a debt to the prince, that shall be refunded first, and the rest divided." We see the same in the preceding article: "And if a merchant, travelling with the *kunas* of others, is wrecked, or taken captive or suffers from a fire, he shall not be forced, nor his property sold...; but if he squanders it in drink or takes part in a brawl and unreasonably squanders the goods belonging to others, then it will depend on those whose *kunas* they were, whether they wait or sell him, it is their will."

Dyakonov thinks the term "sell" literally means the sale of the insolvent merchant into slavery. But that is improbable, since such a sale would scarcely bring in the sum required to pay off his creditors, among whom was the prince himself. According to the *Russkaya Pravda*, slaves were worth 35 rubles on the average, reckoned in the currency of the mid-19th century.<sup>2</sup> Scarcely anyone would be willing to pay more for a man merely because he was

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Dyakonov, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> N. Y. Aristov, *The Industry in Kiev Rus*, p. 281.

a former merchant. Finally, we know what awaited the insolvent merchant in the 12th century. According to the *Church Statutes* of Prince Vsevolod (1125-36) a bankrupt merchant was not turned into a slave, but into an *izgoi* ("there are three kinds of *izgois*: a priest's son who cannot read, a *kholop* who ransoms himself from *kholopage*, and a merchant bad debtor."<sup>1</sup> The latter process did not take place automatically but was due to the need for him to start life anew.

The term "sell" is easily explained otherwise, as it was understood by contemporaries. We find an excellent and extremely lucid explanation of it in Igor's 944 Treaty: "And if a Rus hits a Greek, or a Greek a Rus with a sword, a spear or any other weapon, he shall pay five litres of silver for his offence, in accordance with Rus law; and if he be unable (insolvent—*Author*) his property shall be sold for the best price it fetches, including the very clothes he wears, and these also shall be taken off him; as for the rest, if he swears according to his faith that he has nothing left, thus shall he be let off."<sup>2</sup> We find a similar clause in the *Dvina Statutes* of 1397 compiled on the basis of *Russkaya Pravda*: "And if any one discover something of his stolen in the possession of another, and this one is able to indicate ten successive owners up to the real thief, he shall pay the officials no taxes for such an investigation; as for the thief, if it is his first offence, his property shall be sold to cover the sum involved; but if it is his second offence, his property shall be sold mercilessly, and for the third offence he shall be hung."<sup>3</sup> It is not the thief himself who is being sold but only his property<sup>4</sup>: an equitable portion of it is sold to cover the first theft, and the whole in case of a second offence, while the third earns him death.

<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 142.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the absolutely correct opinion on this issue of S. G. Strumilin in his *Договор займа в древнерусском праве*, стр. 60. (*Agreement on Loans in Ancient Rus Law*, p. 60.)



There are grounds for the assumption that parallel to this official practice there existed yet another which dealt even more severely with a bad debtor. This is hinted at by the draft treaty with the Germans in 1269 in which they attempted to include a clause turning a bad debtor into a slave together with his wife and children.<sup>1</sup> There is also a hint of this in Art. 111 of the *Extensive Pravda* which forbids turning a bad debtor into a slave.

*Russkaya Pravda* has another more specific term denoting the sale into slavery, and that is "to sell *obel*" ("if a master sells his *zakup obel*"—Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 61). And seemingly in order to dispel our doubts on the issue, a special section of the *Russkaya Pravda* (Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 111) on the *kholops*, following the definition of the three sources of *kholopage* (purchase, marriage to a slave woman without a contract and working as a *tiun* or a housekeeper without a contract) there is a special clause: "And one who works for a debt is not a *kholop*; he cannot be turned into a *kholop* either for corn or for interest, but if he does not work the agreed term, he is to return what was given him in kindness; and if he works his full term, he is not guilty." In short, one could not be enslaved for a money or corn loan or for interest unpaid. The "debtor" works off his debt over a specified term. If he fails to work the entire period he must refund the debt. I doubt that this is an ordinary loan. It is quite possible that it is a special form of feudal fee which in some aspects is akin to "voluntary *kholopage*" of the early "service villenage" in Muscovy. Partly in this connection the Karamzin Copy of the *Pravda* states the price of the labour of a woman and her daughter: "An Orphan's *Vyryad*". "And a woman and her daughter . . . one *grivna* a year. . ."<sup>2</sup> The gist of the article is that it reveals that a *ryadovich's* obligations were transferred to his family after his death and stresses the possibility of working off this bondage.

<sup>1</sup> *The Deeds of Great Novgorod and Pskov*, No. 31, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Karamzin Copy, Art. 65

All the written sources which mention slaves enable us to assert that in Kiev Rus slavery was not developing but declining.

But it is patent that the economy of Kiev Rus was progressing and this meant that the decline of slavery was being compensated by the appearance of new labour power servicing the princes, boyars and the Church. It will be seen that among these were primarily the *smerds* who fell into bondage through extra-economic coercion. They were followed by other categories of the rural population which fell into bondage owing to their poverty and inability to carry on their individual holdings.

It is noteworthy that the Church which was the most efficient administrator in all European countries as well as in Byzantium, which held slaves and utilized them, was the first to discard slave labour.

There were church slaves in mediaeval Rus: bishop's *kholops* in Novgorod, slaves of the Kiev Pechera Monastery, and Khutynsk Monastery slaves.<sup>1</sup> The *Russkaya Pravda* speaks of monks' slaves. The *Metropolitan's Justice*, which mentions a full *chelyad*, possibly also means a church slave. In any case, we find no church slaves later on for the Church begins to use serf labour.

In this way the ranks of the *chelyad* gradually undergo an evolution. The Russian *kholop* had a fate similar to that which befell the mediaeval slave (*servus*) throughout Western Europe. The term continues to survive through the Middle Ages, but its content, naturally, changes. In mediaeval Europe the *servus* is not a slave, but a serf. The change in the semantics of the word is caused by the changes in the economic and legal status of the *servus*.

Slaves gradually became scarcer, at least in those economies whose owners were able to adapt themselves to the demands of the times.

As in other countries, the slave in Ancient Rus has a

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<sup>1</sup> *Donative Deed of Varlaam of Khutynsk Monastery*, circa 1192. (Vladimirsky-Budanov, *Reader*, Issue 1, p. 134.)



history of his own. We cannot, unfortunately, trace its beginnings. We do not know for sure what the slave was in the 7th and 8th centuries, but we know that he played an important role in production and that it was he who helped his lord to gain control of the more progressive labour of the peasant.

The earliest *Russkaya Pravda*, which mirrors the social relations of approximately the 8th and 9th centuries, does not elaborate on the slaves because it was a well-known subject which aroused no great controversy and required no special clarification. It is noticeable, however, that there are several strata in this *Pravda* relating to different periods: in its earliest part the slave is concealed under the general term *chelyad* and in the later part he is called a *kholop*.

This earliest part of *Pravda* mentions the fugitive *chelyad* when he was given refuge by a Varangian or a Kolbyag. It is quite possible that this is an extension of a common law to cover a special case involving the Varangians and the Kolbyags. But this case is not very helpful in elucidating the legal and economic status of the slave. We discover that the state protects the interests of the ruling classes and defends their rights to slaves as well. Art. 16 describes the procedure of searching for a stolen or fugitive slave and implies that he has his own price and can be bought and sold.

Art. 17 is undoubtedly of later origin. Its terminology is different. It speaks of the *kholop* who had assaulted a freeman and had hidden himself in his lord's estate. It leads us to the following assumption: 1) cases of assault by *kholops* on freemen had increased, since the law found it necessary to mention them specifically; 2) the lord is not deprived of his slave but pays a fine of 12 *grivnas*; the lord's keep is strong enough and the lord mighty enough to hide a fugitive *kholop* for whom a freeman is undoubtedly looking; 3) if the assaulted freeman succeeds in finding the offender he has a right to "beat him."

With the passage of time and the changing scene the *kholop* question becomes more acute. Life demands the interference of the law in certain cases which crop up in the evolution of social relations.

The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* has its own peculiarities. It deals with the relations within the princely demesne and reveals its structure and organization together with the place and role of the *kholops* in that unit, and, consequently, in any large economy as well. It is noteworthy that a part of the administrative staff of the princely demesne are *kholops*, such as the *selsky* and *ratai starostas*, the wet nurse (who is called a *roba*) and the male nurse. They should be regarded as slaves because their murder is covered by an *urok* and a *prodazha* of 12 *grivnas*, rather than a *vira*: "There is no *vira* (fine payable to the prince) for the murder of a *kholop* and a *roba* (slave woman); but if either of them is killed without any guilt on their part, the set price shall be paid for them and 12 *grivnas* of *prodazha* to the prince."<sup>1</sup> Such is the explanation given by the *Statutes of Vladimir Monomakh*, which are of later origin than the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, but it may be assumed that the rule held good before Monomakh's time as well. I fully realize the dangers of drawing conclusions on the basis of a scale of fines, but I resort to this only because there is a conclusive correspondence between the facts contained in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* and Vladimir Monomakh's law.

The murder of a prince's *tiun* and his senior groom is covered by a double *vira*. Consequently, they are either not *kholops* at all, or not entirely *kholops*, or *kholops* who have risen in the social scale.

The *kholop* is found among the working part of the population of the demesne, side by side with the *smerd* (the peasant) and the *ryadovich* (who works by agreement).<sup>2</sup> Yushkov correctly noted that this merging of the *smerd*

<sup>1</sup> Extensive *Pravda*, Art. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Brief *Pravda*, Art. 26.



with the *kholop* was the result of the successes of feudalism (the peasants held in fee are exploited in the feudal seigniorship on a par with the *kholops*).<sup>1</sup> The *kholop* begins to assume the characteristics of a mediaeval *servus*; the dependent peasant gradually loses his rights and merges with the *servus*.

The *Extensive Pravda* devotes much space to the *kholop*. Thus, while the earliest *Pravda* has three articles on the *chelyad* and the *kholop*, and the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*—three on the *kholop* and two on the bailiffs and nurses, whom we are apparently justified in classifying as *kholops*, the *Extensive Pravda* has 19 articles and two articles on handicraftsmen and nurses, who are possibly *kholops* too. This quantitative increase in the articles on the *kholop* merits attention, and it was this aspect of the question that Yakovlev noted.<sup>2</sup>

The articles drawn up after the conference convened by Vladimir Monomakh are the most interesting since they introduce much that is new into the life of the *kholops*. Apart from the articles on the sources of *kholopage* examined above, in which the legislator's desire to reduce these sources and render them less dangerous to freemen is clearly evident, we see the extension of the *kholop's* civil and juridical rights.

We find him trading on behalf of his lord, undertaking financial obligations,<sup>3</sup> appearing as witness in court,<sup>4</sup> and possessing property.

The conditions stipulated by the Rus side in the treaty with the Germans of 1195, a document drawn up 80 years after Vladimir Monomakh's *Statutes on the Kholops*, are also highly important. They protect the honour of slave

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<sup>1</sup> Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> A. I. Yakovlev discovered 31 articles on the *kholops* in the *Extensive Pravda*, but these include the articles on the *zakups* (op. cit., p. 19).

<sup>3</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Arts. 117 and 116.

<sup>4</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Art. 85.

women: a fine is set up for an attempt to rape a slave woman, while a raped slave woman is freed.

This is an obvious evolution of *kholop* law, which loses its drastic nature and becomes akin to serfdom.

Such are the conclusions one is liable to draw from the *Russkaya Pravda* if it is regarded not merely as a code compiled to register the existing laws, but as an instrument introducing the new laws which history had made necessary to supersede the old whether wholly or in part.

Why then should the conferences "after Yaroslav" and "after Svyatopolk" have been convened, if it was only necessary to record common practice? The *Pravda* itself clearly states that Yaroslav's children abolished several laws in force under their father,<sup>1</sup> and that Vladimir Monomakh abolished laws drawn up by Svyatopolk, his predecessor, and replaced them by new ones.<sup>2</sup> We shall be able to observe the various stages of the development of Rus social relations in *Russkaya Pravda* only if we regard our codes in this light, an approach on which I have insisted for some time.<sup>3</sup>

It can no longer be doubted that the "Kiev period" of our history of the 11th and 12th centuries is a period when slavery disappears and feudal relations grow and mature. Patriarchal domestic slavery, well-known in Slav society, continues to exist side by side with the developing feudal relations, but increasingly losing its importance.

We should not be confused by the considerable numbers of slaves in Rus at the time. Slavery began to show a marked tendency to disappear. It persisted somewhat longer in the boyar and princely demesnes and as a mass phenomenon was still in evidence in the late 15th century, when at last even these archaic economies tended to get rid of the slaves—an erstwhile source of strength which

<sup>1</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Arts. 2 and 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Б. Д. Греков, Очерки по истории феодальных отношений, стр. 130. (B. D. Grekov, *Essays on the History of Feudal Relations*, p. 130.)



had now become an obvious source of weakness. We see slavery completing its dialectical cycle of development.<sup>1</sup> But it had not gone off the stage in the 11th and 12th centuries and continued to exist within the developing feudal society.

The peasant *obshchina* likewise underwent perceptible change under the impact of feudalization. The growth of proprietary inequality undermined it from within, forcing its poorer members to seek refuge with the rich landowner. At the same time, the development of large feudal landholdings threatened the independence of entire communities. In such cases even those peasant members of the *obshchina* who had not been deprived of the means of production fell into the hands of the big landowners. Many of the recently full-fledged members of the community, who owed corvée services to their new masters, were forced to become a part of the lord's *chelyad*. They were not completely identified with the slaves, but became very much akin to them, at least in the eyes of their lords. Engels said of this period of early serfdom that it bore many traces of ancient slavery.

The *Russkaya Pravda* has preserved invaluable data on this period of our society which enables us to study this highly interesting process at least in broad outline.

We shall now pass to an examination of the non-slave elements of the *chelyad*.

### *Ryadovichy*

My understanding of the term *ryadovich* needs considerable explanation, because it conflicts with the meaning previously ascribed to it.

I shall not analyse all the relevant material. I shall only

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<sup>1</sup> The *kholops* of the 17th century are for the most part not connected with the patriarchal slaves of the "Kiev" and "pre-Kiev" periods and are of different origin.

cite opinions which are either of particular interest or belong to scholars whose authority has hitherto been little questioned.

Sergeyevich has two opinions on the *ryadovichy*. He considers the *ryadovich* mentioned in the *Russkaya Pravda* to be an "ordinary" slave, on the grounds that "he is worth 5 *grivnas*, which is the price of an ordinary slave." But he also admits that the *ryadovich* is not necessarily always a slave. "A *ryadovich* is anyone who lives in another's house by *ryad* (agreement)."<sup>1</sup> Mrochek-Drozдовsky views the *ryadovich* as a bondman who works as a steward. The *ryadovichy* are, in his view, bondmen who work as assistant stewards on princely, boyar or other estates.<sup>2</sup> Presnyakov regards the *ryadovich* as a minor economic or administrative agent and quotes Daniil Zatochnik in support of this: "His (the prince's) *tiun* is like unto a fire, and his *ryadovichy* are like sparks. . . . And the *sotsky* and the *ryadovichy* shall not be judged."<sup>3</sup> Leontovich admits that the *ryadovich* is one who has drawn up a contract.<sup>4</sup> Goetz accepts Sergeyevich's interpretation.

At the moment I am not so much concerned with the *ryadovich's* functions (it is true that he is regarded in some sources as a minor agent of the administration of the demesne) as with his social nature. Sergeyevich's opinion can be accepted only in part. I fully agree with his statement that "a *ryadovich* is anyone who lives in another's house by agreement." In other words, he is not a *kholop*. But the reasoning which leads Sergeyevich to equate the *ryadovich* and the slave is unconvincing. In that case we should also have to regard the *smerd* as a slave, because

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. 1, p. 196, Note.

<sup>2</sup> П. Мрочек-Дроздовский, Исследования о Русской Правде, М. 1886, стр. 200. (P. Mrochek-Drozдовsky, *Studies of "Russkaya Pravda,"* Moscow, 1886, p. 200.)

<sup>3</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., p. 293, Note 1.

<sup>4</sup> F. I. Leontovich, op. cit., p. 9.



his price is also 5 *grivnas*.<sup>1</sup> It is in general unwise to determine the social status of the different categories of the population solely on the strength of the scale of fines. We know how such a scale of fines is given in the *Statutes of Alexei Mikhailovich*. It says, for example, that "the working people, and the monastery and landlord and demesne peasants and paupers shall receive as much as the peasants of the tsar's manors for dishonour and maiming," i.e., two rubles. In this document the working people, i.e., the *kholops*, are on a par with serfs and paupers, while a fine equal to only half the sum is exacted for a freeman who subsists on odd jobs. (*Statutes*, Chap. X, Art. 94.) Hence, the owner's *kholop* is valued higher than a free workingman, which is very natural.

The social nature of the *ryadovich* is explained in the *Russkaya Pravda* itself. Art. 110 of the Fourth Troitsk Copy reads: "There are three sources of *obel kholopage*: ... if some one marries a slave woman without previous agreement, and if by agreement, it shall be acknowledged even as agreed; and the third source: becoming a *tiun* without previous agreement, or whosoever works as a steward; and if by agreement it shall be acknowledged even as agreed." A man who intended to marry a slave would do well to conclude an agreement in advance with the owner of his bride. And, apparently, that is how it mostly was in actual life, as is witnessed by the *Judicial Law for the People*: "He who works for a slave woman. Thus, he who works for a slave woman, declares his price before a witness, and (she) shall be freed."<sup>2</sup> It appears that the ransom price is agreed upon before witnesses. It is then worked off by the slave's husband. This seems to have been the case not only in Bulgaria, but also in Rus. One could become a steward or a *tiun* by agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Sergeevich believes that Art. 26 of the *Russkaya Pravda* (Academic Copy) speaks of the "*smerd kholop*," an opinion with which I cannot agree.

<sup>2</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 479; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 501.

I think that the types of agreement involved when a person accepted a post or hired himself out for work are not limited to the two cases mentioned, because both are cited by the *Russkaya Pravda* only in connection with the origin of *obel kholopage* and not as an independent subject. There is yet another important confirmation of my thesis. An article of the Karamzin Copy entitled: "An Orphan's *Vyryad*," says: "A woman and her daughter... working for 12 years, a *grivna* a year, or twenty *grivnas* and four *grivnas* in *kunas*."<sup>1</sup> Ignoring the 12-year term which is used by some "book-keeper," a contemporary of *Pravda*, in all his calculations ("and from 20 sheep and from 2 offspring for 12 years...; and from 20 goats and from 2 offspring for 12 years," etc.) as well as his totals, we get a brief and intelligible statement: a woman and her daughter, "the orphans," earn a *grivna* a year, and this they do with the aim of gaining the right to leave their master, with whom the husband had concluded a *ryad*. This is a family of a *ryadovich*.

We find a similar situation in the *Pskov Court Deed*, which says: "And if a lord's peasant dies, and there is a promissory note left on the receipt of a loan, and his wife and children are not mentioned in the note... they shall pay off that loan according to the note."<sup>2</sup> The *Russkaya Pravda* also provides for a case when a *ryadovich* dies and his wife has to work off obligations contained in the *ryad*. The *vyryad*, therefore, is a way to abolish the *ryad*, a way to free oneself of the bondage imposed by a *ryad*.

Under no circumstances, then, is the *ryadovich* a slave. According to the Moscow terminology this is one of the types of *serebrenichestvo*.<sup>3</sup> The well-known mid-15-century deed of Prince Mikhail Andreyevich to the Kirill Monastery gives a very full list of those who came to work at the

<sup>1</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Vol. 1, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> *Pskov Court Deed*, Art. 85.

<sup>3</sup> A derivative of *srebro*—silver.—Tr.



monastery. Among them are *serebreniks*, *polovniks*,<sup>1</sup> *ryad* and *Yuriev people*.<sup>2</sup> The deed explains that they can leave their masters only if they make a payment in silver. Strictly speaking, they are all *serebreniks*, while the *ryad* people are apparently the *ryadovichy*.

While the *ryadovich* is not a slave, nor is he a wage labourer in the capitalist sense. His bondage is purely feudal, because his agreement with the master imposes in a bond of a different kind, and he becomes a part of the dependent population of the demesne, side by side with the *kholop*. In short, he becomes a part of the *chelyad*.

These considerations prevent me from agreeing with the criticism by Yushkov, whose reasoning, I think, is much too formal. In rejecting my interpretation of the *ryadovich* as a derivative of *ryad*, or agreement, he declares: "The *ryad* is an agreement. It must have a concrete content. An agreement involving hire breeds hirelings; an agreement involving a loan may breed *zakups* and *vdachas*. What else could an agreement cover? The term *ryadovich* could scarcely have become common usage if *ryad* signifies an agreement to marry a slave woman."<sup>3</sup> To begin with, the *Russkaya Pravda* mentions *ryad* not only in connection with marrying a slave woman, but also with taking on the job of *tiun* or steward. Furthermore, the *Pravda* lists only those cases which threatened to turn a freeman into a slave. There were doubtlessly other kinds of *ryad*. But the point is not in the origin of the term, but in its effects, when the one concluding a *ryad* was turned into a bondman. This is purely feudal law. It is neither an agreement involving hire, nor one involving a loan, but an agreement whereby one of the contracting parties became a feudal bondman. It was an agreement peculiar to the social rela-

<sup>1</sup> A derivative of *pol*—half.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> ААО, т. I, № 48. (*Akty Arkheograficheskoi Ekspeditsii*, Vol. I, No. 48.)

<sup>3</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 131.

tions of feudalism. The old controversy on whether it was an agreement involving hire or one involving a loan that was the basis of the interpretation of the Ryazan or Moscow servitude, was just as barren as the attempt to explain the *ryad* by applying the standards of another social environment. Granted that the *ryadovich* could also be a "minor economic agent, and an assistant of the *tiun*." But that was his function, his job, and not his social nature.

Compared with slavery, the institution of the *ryad* was undoubtedly a new phenomenon, which was the result of a stratification based on proprietary inequality within the community. Divorced from the means of production, the erstwhile members of the community were forced to go into servitude. As is evidenced by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, the status of the *ryadovichy* is very lowly: "And in the *ryadovich* of the prince (there are) 5 *grivnas*, and in the *smerd* and in the *kholop* 5 *grivnas*." (Arts. 25 and 26.) These five *grivnas* serve to cover the loss incurred by the master through the murder of one of his *chelyad*, which included the *ryadovichy*.

We are not fully aware of the *ryadovich*'s position, but the chronicles lead us to believe that his lowly station in life and consequent hardships during the periods when class conflicts came to a head due to the intensified offensive of the landholders against the *obshchina*, served to determine their attitude to the popular movements of the 11th and 12th centuries, and particularly to the striking events of 1113, which resulted in Vladimir Monomakh being invited to Kiev.

Vladimir Monomakh was forced to consider the problem of the *ryadovichy*. His *Statutes* do not speak of the *ryadovichy* in general, but only of one kind of *ryadovich*, namely, the *zakup*.

We then have to examine as fully as possible the legal and economic nature of the *zakup*.



The problem of the *zakup* remains one of the most controversial.

I do not think it necessary to list all that has been written on the subject. It may, however, be useful to cite the basic papers and outline the different approaches.

The first comment on the *zakups* was made by Boltin, who was later supported by Evers and Reits. According to this a *zakup* was a man temporarily "working in servitude."<sup>1</sup> He is in a state akin to what later became known as servile *kholopage*. Evers calls the *zakup* a "hireling," "a man temporarily enslaved." He regards the "*roleiny zakup*" as a "hired tiller," a "hired servant."<sup>2</sup>

Reits adds that "work by agreement was something like bondage, albeit partial." Elsewhere, he describes this servant as a "hired labourer." Reits believes it possible that the *zakup* concluded an agreement to work all his life, and compares him to the "enslaved people," who worked until the death of the lord.<sup>3</sup> He fails to consider the fact that prior to the eighties of the 16th century, before such agreements were concluded by the "enslaved people," the term of bondage was specified, usually a year. The term was extended, depending on the ability of the "person enslaved" to repay the earnest money.

Leshkov<sup>4</sup> and Sergeyeovich<sup>5</sup> also regarded the *zakup* as a hired person. Pavlov-Silvansky<sup>6</sup> equated him to later-day *serebreniks*.

The idea of debt becomes gradually associated with the term *zakup*. Here is Solovyov's definition of the *zakup*: "A

<sup>1</sup> И. Н. Болтин, „Правда Русская“, СПб 1792, М. 1799. (I. N. Boltin, *Russkaya Pravda*, St. Petersburg, 1792, Moscow, 1799.)

<sup>2</sup> F. G. Evers, *The Earliest Rus Law*.

<sup>3</sup> А. Рейц, Опыт истории российских государственных и гражданских законов, М. 1836, стр. 194, 196. (A. Reits, *An Essay on the History of Russian State and Civil Laws*, Moscow, 1836, pp. 194, 196.)

<sup>4</sup> V. Leshkov, *The Russian People and the State*, p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> V. I. Sergeyeovich, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>6</sup> N. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, pp. 225-26.

*zakup*, or hireling, was a worker who was hired for a definite term and for agreed wages, which he apparently received in advance in the form of a loan."<sup>1</sup> Kalachov<sup>2</sup> and Belyayev<sup>3</sup> are of the same opinion. Maksimeiko objects and insists that "from the legal point of view, the *zakup* was a debtor, and not a hireling."<sup>4</sup> The conception is complicated by other considerations about the *zakup* "pledging himself as security,"<sup>5</sup> "selling himself for earnest money"<sup>6</sup> and "pledging his person."<sup>7</sup>

Vladimirsky-Budanov defines the *zakup* practice as "a combination of an agreement involving a loan with one involving the hire of a person and the hire of a piece of property."<sup>8</sup>

Kluchevsky's definition of the *zakup* is overburdened with legal aspects: his *zakup* is simultaneously a personal pledge, and a leaseholder, and a borrower of money.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, op. cit., p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> Н. Калачов, Предварительные юридические сведения для полного объяснения Русской Правды, вып. I, СПб 1880, стр. 141. (N. Kalachov, *Preliminary Legal Facts for a Complete Explanation of "Russkaya Pravda,"* Issue 1, St. Petersburg, 1880, p. 141.)

<sup>3</sup> I. D. Belyayev, op. cit., p. 12. The author differentiates between the legal nature of the *zakups* engaged in tillage and non-tillers.

<sup>4</sup> Н. А. Максимейко, Закупы „Русской, Правды“, стр. 46. (N. Maksimeiko, *The Zakups of "Russkaya Pravda,"* p. 46.)

<sup>5</sup> Д. Меуер, Древнее право залога, Казань 1855, стр. 7 и 8. (D. Meier, *The Ancient Law of the Pledge*, Kazan, 1855, pp. 7 and 8.)  
<sup>6</sup> Н. Дювернуа, Источники права и суд в древней России, М. 1869, стр. 113, 128-129. (N. Duvernois, *Justice and the Sources of Law in Ancient Rus*, Moscow, 1869, pp. 113, 128-29.)  
<sup>7</sup> N. Khlebnikov, op. cit., pp. 241-42.

<sup>8</sup> К. А. Неволин, Полное собрание сочинений, СПб 1857, т. I, стр. 189. (K. A. Nevolin, *Collected Works*, St. Petersburg, 1857, Vol. I, p. 189.) This agreement is interpreted by the author as "personal hire" under which a "freeman sold himself into temporary *khologape*," the wages being given him in advance in the form of a loan.

<sup>9</sup> B. N. Chicherin, *Essays on the History of Russian Law*, p. 154.

<sup>10</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., p. 59, Note 97.

<sup>11</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *Per Capita Taxation and the Repeal of Kholopage in Russia. Essays and Investigations*, Book 1, pp. 372-375. "The *roleiny zakup* is a tiller who pledges his own person, a lessee with a loan, the payment of which he guaranteed by pledging his own person and his work for the owner, who was also the creditor." In his *History of Estates in Russia* he gives a simpler interpretation of the *zakup*.



There were earlier attempts to explain the practice of the *zakup* with the aid of later sources, particularly Lithuanian-Russian law. Yasinsky's papers, in which he makes use of 16th-century Lithuanian-Russian documents to infer that the *zakup* of *Russkaya Pravda* is akin to the *zakup*, or "one who has pledged his person" in Lithuanian Rus, are also of interest. He defines the deal regarding the *zakup* as "a deal involving hire ... accompanied by a pledge of his own person."<sup>1</sup>

Grushevsky also has an incorrect understanding of this phenomenon. "It was a mortgage involving a human being," he says, "which was concluded by himself or by another as a guaranty for the money which he was to work off."<sup>2</sup>

Picheta was against identifying the *zakup* of *Russkaya Pravda* with the *zakup* of the Lithuanian Statutes. He points to the wide chronological gap between the former (12th century) and the latter (16th century), a fact which excludes the possibility of the two being identical, even if they do bear similar names. He then stresses the need for a study of the legal and economic status of the *zakup* in connection with the evolution of feudal relations in the 16th century.

The formal interpretation has also met with opposition. Presnyakov does not think the controversy over the legal substance of the agreement is of great importance. He

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These are, he says, tillers who "received a loan from the landowners for acquiring implements as well as patches of land which they tilled with the aid of the lord's cattle and implements the use of which they repaid by working for the landowner." (V. Kluchevsky, *History of Estates in Russia*, p. 49.) In *A Course of Russian History* he calls the *zakups* "agricultural workers who settled on privately owned land and received a loan from the landowners." (Part I, p. 250.)

<sup>1</sup> М. Н. Ясинский, Закупы Русской Правды и памятников западно-русского права ("Сборник статей, посвященный М. Ф. Владимирскому-Буданову", Киев 1904, стр. 456-460). (M. Yasinsky, *The Zakups of "Russkaya Pravda" and Memorials of West Rus Law. Collection*, dedicated to M. F. Vladimirovsky-Budanov, Kiev, 1904, pp. 456-60.)

<sup>2</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, *A History of Ukraine Rus*, Vol. III, pp. 319-23.

agrees that "the stipulations of the agreement are obscure" and says that the "status of the *zakup*, so common in mediaeval times, is the dual and contradictory status of people who are semi-free."<sup>1</sup>

Yakovkin described the controversy which raged around the *zakup* in his time as fruitless, and offered his own solution with the aid of Scandinavian sources. He erroneously believes the Norwegian "caup" to have found its way into the *Russkaya Pravda* in the form of the *kupa*. A number of his other observations are very convincing (the hire, or usury; the pledge, or hire, etc.).<sup>2</sup>

Finally, during the post-revolutionary period, attempts were made to solve the problem from the Marxist point of view.

Rubinstein admits the existence of feudal relations in Russia and reproaches his predecessors for their "incorrect approach." He says that "they sought to find an explanation of the term in contemporary juridical conceptions" and failed to notice that it was "a complex phenomenon, composed of a fusion of elements of different juridical relationships." But when face to face with the problem, Rubinstein unfortunately reaches a conclusion which is at variance with the facts. He decides to equate the *zakup* with the West-European *precarium*. This is "a person with his own plot and economy who becomes dependent on another who is more powerful economically and politically; he relinquishes his land and economy in order to have them returned to him as a benefice or grace."<sup>3</sup>

Argunov's investigation follows similar lines. He rejects with particular vehemence the contentions of the so-called historical and legal school, including Yakovkin's Norwe-

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., pp. 300 and 301.

<sup>2</sup> I. I. Yakovkin, *The Zakups of "Russkaya Pravda."* (*Journal of the Ministry of Education*, 1913, April, pp. 236-95 and May, pp. 101-19.)

<sup>3</sup> Н. Л. Рубинштейн, Нарис історії Київської Русі („Історія України," т. I, Предкапіталістична доба). (N. L. Rubinstein, *Outline of the History of Kiev Rus. Istoria Ukraini*, Vol. I. Predkapitalistichna doba.)



gian comparisons. He also discovers property and an individual economy among the *zakups*, whom he classified into two groups: 1) the *roleiny zakup*, who tills the lord's arable land with his master's stock, and 2) the *zakup* who pays his lord quitrent, the so-called *kupa*. As a legal phenomenon he equates the practice of the *zakup* to the emphyteusis, a long-term or hereditary tenancy involving the payment of quitrent.<sup>1</sup>

In his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus* and *The Social and Political System and Law of the Kiev State* Yushkov focuses attention on the practice of the *zakup*. In a chapter entitled "The Enslavement of the Rural Population," he analyses "an institution which was ... one of the chief sources of serfdom, that most brutal form of feudal bondage." By this he meant the practice of the *zakup*.<sup>2</sup> "The practice of the *zakup* is an institution, a relationship *sui generis*, which cannot be measured with the yardstick of either Roman or modern civil law."<sup>3</sup> His reappraisal of the problem leads him to conclude that the institution is based on a debt obligation, and that "a *zakup* becomes a *zakup* to ensure and redeem that obligation."<sup>4</sup>

He concludes with an opinion very similar to that expressed by Chicherin. ("A *zakup* is one who undertakes to work for a debt until it is paid off. Such a state is best defined as a pledge involving a human being.")<sup>5</sup>

I do not intend to polemize with the authors with whom I differ in this cursory review of the various papers; I wish merely to demonstrate the interest in the problem, the difficulties involved and the methods used by the various scholars.

I feel that such a survey would be of assistance to those who wish to study the problem, and a personal vindication.

<sup>1</sup> P. A. Argunov, *The Zakups of "Russkaya Pravda."* (*Izvestia Akademii Nauk, otделение obshchestvennykh nauk*, No. 10, 1934, p. 798.)

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> B. N. Chicherin, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

It is indeed a complex problem and I believe it can be solved only if we appreciate the historical circumstances under which such phenomena originated, lived and died in Ancient Rus.

It is true that the *zakup* is called a "hireling" in some versions of the *Pravda*,<sup>1</sup> but this fact is quite insufficient to determine the substance of the practice of the *zakup*. Furthermore, the terms "hireling" should itself be understood as the *Pravda*'s contemporaries understood it, and not as we are prone to understand it. Terms often outlive their initial use and are applied to circumstances totally unlike those in which they originate. That is why it is imperative in studying phenomena to proceed not from the terminology to the facts, but to explain the former in the light of the circumstances. A document of the 12th century repeatedly uses the term hire in the sense of usury, of interest, in addition to using it in the accepted sense. This convergence of two concepts in a single term is in itself significant.

Here is an excerpt from *Kirik's Inquiry* previously noted by Yakovkin<sup>2</sup> and Presnyakov<sup>3</sup>: "And this is what he told us to teach about interest, that is usury: if it is a priest, tell him thus: 'It is not decent for thee to celebrate mass, unless thou desist from this practice'; and if it is a layman, tell him thus: 'Thou shouldst not take hire. . . .' And if they cannot desist, then tell them: 'Be merciful, be not harsh; if thou hadst given out at five *kunas*, take only three or four.'"<sup>4</sup> Bishop Ilya of Novgorod says in his *Precepts*: "And it is also said that other priests take hire, which is absolutely forbidden to a clergyman." The *Precepts Compiled from all Books* say the same: "Never give *kunas* for hire,

<sup>1</sup> "And if the master sells a *zakup* into full *kholopage*, the hireling is freed from the repayment of all *kunas*. . . ." (Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 61.)

<sup>2</sup> I. I. Yakovkin, op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>3</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., p. 299.

<sup>4</sup> *Russian Historical Library*, Vol. VI, St. Petersburg, 1880, pp. 24-25.



for St. Paul the Apostle likened a usurer unto a libertine."<sup>1</sup> The *Life of Andrei the Idiot in Christ* inquires: "And didst take a bribe when hiring him for work?"<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, the hire in these examples, as possibly in the *Russkaya Pravda*, should be rendered by the term "interest," ineffectually outlawed by Church regulation both in mediaeval Europe and in Rus.

The *zakup* who is called a hireling is not merely one who has sold his labour power, but one who has done so by contracting a "debt" through a special kind of *ryad*, or agreement, and has fallen into a special kind of personal bondage. I feel, nevertheless, that no particular stress should be laid on the "debt" aspect, because of the risk of modernizing the phenomenon. An agreement involving a loan is clearly described in the *Russkaya Pravda*, but a debtor is not necessarily a *zakup*. A *zakup* is a bondman in particularly difficult circumstances. It is only one of the types of feudal bondage common in mediaeval times. This "debt" served the same purpose as it did in agreements on servitude in the villages of the Russian state. In short, it was a condition of the purchase of labour power in the form of feudal servitude. Often—this was undoubtedly the practice in Moscow—it went to the bondman's master who hired him out, rather than to the bondman himself. It is that servitude of which Lenin wrote: "And the free Russian peasant in the 20th century is still forced to enter into servitude under the local landlord—in precisely the same way as the *smerds* (as the peasants were called in the *Russkaya Pravda*) when they 'signed up' with the landlords!"<sup>3</sup>

I believe it is the old meaning of the term "hireling" which we see in Moscow in the early 14th century. In his donative deed to the Pechera falconers, Prince Ivan Danilovich Kalita frees them from the payment of tribute. Hire-

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Ministry of Education*, 1854, December, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> I. I. Sreznevsky, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 12, p. 237.

lings were also among those freed: "He who works on ready horses, and is himself in *kunas*."<sup>1</sup> We shall hardly err if we interpret the "ready horses" as being the horses of the lord used by the *zakup* to till his master's arable land, and the *kunas* as the money which placed him in a special kind of bondage with his master.

In an interesting document which includes parts of the *Russkaya Pravda* first read by Yushkov, the *Metropolitan's Justice*,<sup>2</sup> this subject is treated with clarity. Art. 27 has been somewhat mutilated by an old copyist (the punctuation and certain corrections are mine—*Author*): "And if a *chelyad*, who is a hireling, who does not wish to remain with his lord<sup>3</sup> appears in court: he is not guilty, but should repay the earnest money twofold. But if he runs away from his master he shall be delivered to the latter for ever." And Arts. 28 and 29 read: "If a lord kills a full *chelyad*, he is not guilty of murder. . . . But (if he kills) a *zakup* hireling, then he is guilty of murder." This text proves that the *zakup* is a part of the *chelyad*.

We see a different approach to two kinds of *chelyad*: the full *chelyad*, or the *obel kholop*, and the *chelyad* who is a hireling, or a *zakup*.

This naturally suggests comparison with Art. 56 of the *Russkaya Pravda* (Fourth Troitsk Copy): "If the *zakup* runs away from his master he becomes a full *kholop*; but if he goes in search of *kunas* and does it openly, or runs to the prince or judges to complain of the injuries inflicted by his lord, he shall not be enslaved, but shall be given justice." And Art. 89 of the same copy says: "And there is no wergild for the *kholop* and the slave woman, but if either is killed without any offence on their part, an *urok* shall be paid for the *kholop* or the slave woman." We have another analogy in the *Dvina Statutes*: "And if a lord hits his

<sup>1</sup> *Akty Arkheograficheskoi Ekspeditsii*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1836, No. 3, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Zanyatia Arkheograficheskoi Komissii* for 1927-28, Issue 35.

<sup>3</sup> The original reads "and his lord."



*kholog* or slave woman in error, and death occurs, he shall not be judged by the vice-gerents, nor fined."<sup>1</sup> And the lord has a right to beat the *zakup* only "for good reason."<sup>2</sup>

The hireling *chelyad* or the *zakup chelyad* is described in the *Metropolitan's Justice* as appearing before a court where he presents his plea to sever his *zakup* relationship with his lord. That is his right, but in this case he is to refund the earnest money twofold. This stipulation indicates bondage and is fully analogous to the *izorniks* of Art. 63 of the *Pskov Court Deed*, as well as to the French *servi*, the German *Kurmede*, etc.

The *zakup* hireling appears as a bondman who scarcely resembles the capitalist worker selling his labour power. Nor is the earnest money exactly what is commonly understood by the term. Our ancient documents repeatedly use the term *zadati*,<sup>3</sup> *zadatisya*<sup>4</sup> in the sense of delivering oneself up to someone, or becoming someone's subject.<sup>5</sup> The earnest money is the sum the *zakup* receives from his master in becoming a bondman. That is not exactly what we should call a loan today.

The instability of the peasant's economic status is too well known to require discussion here. The mass impoverishment of the *smerds*, which was one of the chief sources of the practice of the *zakup* and other forms of feudal bondage, becomes entirely understandable if we recall the numerous calamities that befell the peasant under the feudal system—above all, the ceaseless internecine warfare and the campaigns abroad, apart from the internal economic processes.

But the origin of this or that form of bondage cannot be fully explained solely by natural calamities. It should

<sup>1</sup> *The Dvina Statutes*, Art. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 62.

<sup>3</sup> A derivative of *dati*—give.—*Tr.*

<sup>4</sup> The suffix *syä* means self.—*Tr.*

<sup>5</sup> "That you become the subjects of the Grand Prince and reject Novgorod." (*First Novgorod Annals* for 1397, etc. N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, p. 119.)

be remembered that we are studying a society where bondage is born of production itself and where the class of feudal lords—land monopolists—resorts to extra-economic coercion as one of the most potent means of subjugating more and more new groups of immediate producers. But there is hardly a form of economy in class society in which economic coercion is unknown, at least as a subsidiary means of appropriating the surplus product. It is this economic road that led the *zakup* into bondage.

When Vladimir Monomakh ascended the Kiev throne during an insurrection of the lower classes, which was in part an uprising of the debtors against their creditors, he put a stop to the uprising with the aid of a number of measures, including that of compromise.<sup>1</sup> That part of the *Extensive Pravda* which bears the title "And this was Ordained by Vladimir Vsevolodovich," is a vivid illustration of his activities. It has not been possible to determine the origin of all the elements of his *Statutes*, but beyond doubt they in substance dealt with all aspects of the debt issue. Therefore the *zakup* found a legitimate place in the *Statutes*, as one whose relations with his lord were based on money.

The latest attempt to give a more precise interpretation of Monomakh's *Statutes* was made by Tikhomirov. He believes that they began with a report on the conference in Berestov in 1113, included the legislation on the *rezas* and the *zakups* and ended with the following words: "And the

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<sup>1</sup> I. I. Sreznevsky, in his *Сказания о святых Борисе и Глебе*, СПб 1860, стр. 86 (*Lay of the Saints Boris and Gleb*, St. Petersburg, 1860, column 86), cites a highly interesting text, which is complementary to the brief report of the *Ipaty Annals* on the events of 1113. It reveals important details of this major uprising of the lower classes, such as its extensive scale and the part played by the Kiev nobility in inviting Monomakh to the Kiev throne. This text was used by M. D. Priselkov in his *Очерки по церковно-политической истории Киевской Руси X—XII вв.* (*Essays on the Ecclesiastical and Political History of Kiev Rus in the 10th-12th Centuries*, pp. 322-23.) M. N. Tikhomirov made use of another variant of this text in his *A Study of "Russkaya Pravda,"* p. 210.



*zakup* is to be lightly burdened when there is need of it."<sup>1</sup> I think that the *kholop* statutes also bear traces of Monomakh's efforts.

It is obvious that the legislation on the *zakups* is closely related to the aggravation of the class struggle. The *zakup* was granted the formal right of litigation against his master and the right to leave him "in search of *kunas*." The *zakup*'s responsibilities for his master's property was clearly defined, and his property and personal rights given substantial protection. The formal nature of some of the articles, designed to create a political effect, strikes the eye. Thus, the lord could beat the *zakup* only "for good reason" and never "without cause," or "irresponsibly" while drunk. There "guaranties" indicate the *zakup*'s desperate situation prior to the 1113 uprising. At the same time they show that the lawgiver was forced to compromise and made "concessions" which, however, were purely formal. The nature of Monomakh's activities are strikingly defined in the message of Metropolitan Nikifor in which the prince is depicted as "regulating the procedures in court cases, maintaining the truth for all time, and meting out justice and equity among the people."<sup>2</sup>

If there is reason to assume that these "guaranties" were relegated to oblivion after they had served their turn the description of the *zakup*'s position in the lord's economy can hardly be doubted.

A special chapter in the *Statutes* of Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh, which are a part of the *Extensive Pravda*, is devoted to the *zakup*. This part of the *Pravda* entitled "On the *Zakup*" (Articles 56-62 of the Fourth Troitsk Copy), is, on the whole, one of the most difficult to understand, which is why there are such divergences of opinion regarding it among our scholars. In order to substantiate my statements, I shall consider its most important aspects.

<sup>1</sup> M. N. Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 206-09.

<sup>2</sup> M. N. Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 211.

Art. 56 which stipulates that the fugitive *zakup* is turned into a slave, but has the right openly to go "in search of *kunas*" and even appeal to the courts against his master, is quite clear, with the exception of the rather obscure phrase "in search of *kunas*." I am inclined to think that this is a case when the *zakup* obtains his master's permission to procure money from another source to secure his release from bondage. The *zakup*, then, has the legal right to terminate his relationship with the lord, as was the case with the bondman in Moscow (кабальный человек) in the early period of the existence of the institution of the *kholop* in a state of servitude (кабальное холопство). The *Metropolitan's Justice* confirms that the *zakup* had the legal right to leave his master: "And if a *chelyad*, who is a hireling (who is a *zakup*—*Author*) appears in court, declaring that he does not wish to remain with his lord. . . ." The law states clearly that "he is not guilty," but in that case the lord has the right to exact "twofold repayment of the earnest money." This is why the *zakup* goes "in search of *kunas*."

The next two articles, 57 and 58, are extremely controversial. I do not propose to analyse every opinion separately. I shall state my own interpretation of the two articles, which are intrinsically linked. I quote both in full: "If a lord has a *zakup* engaged in tillage and he ruins the *voisky*<sup>1</sup> horse, the lord shall not pay; (but if the plough and harrow were given him by the lord from whom he receives the *kupa* and if he spoils these implements, he must pay for them)<sup>2</sup>; and if the lord sends the *zakup* away on some job and something is spoiled in his absence, he shall not pay for such loss." (Art. 57.) "If a horse is led away from a shed or pen, the *zakup* shall not pay for it. But if the horse is lost in the field, or the *zakup* does not drive the horse where the master has ordered, or if the horse is lost on the *zakup*'s own job, he

<sup>1</sup> Grekov quotes the original as *voisky*, and adds that other variants say *voinsky* and *svoisky*.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> Brackets mine.—*Author.*



shall pay for the loss." (Art. 58.) The part of the text I have parenthesized appears to be an explanatory insertion, because in substance and form it is wedged into *Pravda's* text, which deals with a very definite subject.

Both articles refer to the *zakup* ploughman (hence there must have been *zakups* who were not ploughmen, similar to the Moscow bondmen) and to the lord's horses, which the *zakup* constantly uses in his toil. The articles provide for the following cases: 1) the lord's horse is lost while the *zakup* is using it on his master's job (*corvée*); 2) the horse is lost in the absence of the *zakup* sent away on another job; 3) the horse is stolen from a stable into which it was put by the *zakup*, who had thus done his duty; 4) the horse is lost due to the negligence of the *zakup*, who had failed to put it in the stable; 5) the horse is lost while the *zakup* is using it on his personal work. In the first three cases the *zakup* is not responsible for the horse and does not have to make good the loss. In the other two, the *zakup* is obliged to pay the lord the price of the horse.

The insertion on the plough and the harrow, made by analogy to the subject of the horse, denotes, I think, that the lord "gives" the plough and the harrow to the *zakup*, i.e., he gives him the right to use them with the proviso that he makes good any possible loss. The word "give" is not used in connection with the horse, which indicates that it remained in the lord's stable, or pen, from which the *zakup* took it when he had need of it to work for the master, and sometimes for himself, naturally, with the owner's permission. On the other hand, the plough and the harrow are given to the *zakup*, who keeps them at home, on his own plot, or leaves them out in the field, as was often the practice much later. It is clear therefore, that the owner had given the *zakup* the implements and expects him to return them or their equivalent, and is not concerned with the details.

Such an interpretation of this part of the *Russkaya*

*Pravda* requires a commentary, particularly in view of the Academic edition of the *Pravda*. Yushkov is absolutely right when he says that prior to the Academic edition, based on all available copies, scholars were wont to select this or that variant of a moot point at will, and thus attribute a different character to the institution of the *zakup*, depending on their choice. (I have in mind the word "horse," described as "*voisky*, *svoisky* and *voin-sky*.) He is right, too, in asserting that all the earliest copies without exception, among them the Troitsk, the Synodal and the Pushkin, with their derivatives, refer only to the *voisky* horse. This leads him to conclude that the term *voisky* is the one initially used by the *Pravda*.<sup>1</sup>

Such a conclusion will scarcely be disputed. It is a different matter when it comes to deciphering the ancient term *voisky*. It is commonly accepted that it had the same meaning in antiquity as it has today. This has even led some to assert that the *zakup* was a military man, and furthermore a mounted soldier. There are in fact no grounds for so extreme a conclusion.

The *Pravda* is quite explicit. The articles on the *zakup* engaged in tillage are designed to define his status in the agricultural economy of the demesne. That is why he is called a *zakup* engaged in tillage, a *zakup* ploughman,<sup>2</sup> and is given a plough and a harrow by his master. That is why he works with the lord's horse on the lord's arable land and also for himself with the permission of his master. That is why, again, he has to put the horse into a stable or pen, and why he is held responsible for its loss if he is guilty of it.

All this is clear from the *Pravda* and, as I mean to show, in no way contradicts the term *voisky*. It only requires closer examination.

Among the Western Slavs *wojsko* means "many,"

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<sup>1</sup> S.V. Yushkov, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

<sup>2</sup> The original reads: "*roleiny zakup*."—Tr.



"number"<sup>1</sup>; *vojski* means "his," "one's own." The meaning of this term among the Southern Slavs, which has been retained in some parts to this day, is no less interesting. Among the Horvatians *vojska* means *die Leute, homines, čeljad, ljudi, liudstwo, narod, puk, swijet, swijetina, domači, familia, glota obitely, župa, čeljad* (liudi, žene i dieca) n.p. *ovoj kuči ima mnogo vojska*.<sup>2</sup> Among the Serbs, to this day, *vojska* has the same meaning as *župa*, domestics. The Serbian woman calls her husband *voino*. Jireček believes that *vojevoda* = *voje + voda*, i.e., the head of the genus.

Thus the initial meaning of the word *voisko* among the Slavs was people united by consanguinity (*kuča*), or economic interests (*župa*). Hence, the initial meaning of *voisky* is "domestic," "belonging to that economy," "one's own." With the passage of time this term was replaced by its equivalent *svoisky*, which to this day is used in the South and in the Ukraine to mean "domestic," "belonging to that economy." It may well be that in the North where this term was not known, the copyist who no longer understood the meaning of *voisky* and *svoisky* arbitrarily changed them to *voinsky*, which, undoubtedly, led to a distortion of their initial meaning.

I feel this to be the simplest and most plausible explanation of the terms *voisky* and *svoisky* corresponding to the substance of that part of the *Russkaya Pravda* which deals with the *zakups*.

<sup>1</sup> B. Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego*. *Wojsko* czego, *mnóstwo, liczba, tłum, tłuszcza, chmura, eine grosse Menge, grosse Zahl*. *Wojski*—jego.

<sup>2</sup> *Rječnik Hrvatskoga jezika*. Skupili i obradili Dr. Iveković i dr. Jvan Kroz u Zagrebu 1901. Cf. also Meynert Hermann, *Geschichte des Kriegswesens und Heerverfassungen in Europa*. Wien, 1868, S. 35. "*Župa*" bedeutet noch gegenwärtig bei den Dalmatinern das "Hausvolk" und ist gleichbedeutend mit den (serbischen) *vojska, puk, (plk, pluk, plok)*, mit *čeljad, žlachta, deti, detic, otroci* u. dgl. Daher ist auch "*Župa*," sowohl als "*plk*" mit dem deutschen "Sippe" und "Volk" nicht sprach, sondern auch sachverwandt. In der Folge haben die Worte *čeljad, vojska, pluk*, die engere Bedeutung des Kriegsvolks angenommen." Vgl. *Ueber Eigenthumsverletzungen und deren Rechtsfolgen nach dem altböhmischem Rechte*, von Dr. Herm. Jireček, Wien, 1885, S. 1.

Thus, in the *Russkaya Pravda* the *zakup* is not connected with a war horse, but with a work horse. He uses it to plough the lord's arable land and to work for himself on the plot allocated to him by his master. He is not a military man, but an agricultural worker. He is a hireling who is not in a state of capitalist, but of feudal bondage, settled on land provided by the lord, which the *Pravda* calls an *otaritsa*. I feel that the most plausible explanation of *otaritsa* is that it is a plot of land given the *zakup* by his master.

This is supported by two facts: 1) it is in line with the general nature of the *zakup* practice, and 2) it is substantiated by the chronicles.

In his deed of 1382, Archbishop Dionisy of Suzdal uses this word to render the Greek παρούσιον<sup>1</sup>. He warns that private property is not permitted in monasteries and points out that the institution of private property, or an individual private holding, has been sown by the devil and is called παρούσιον, *otaritsa* in Russian. Παρούσιον is an ancient juridical term used to denote the property which the *pater familias* handed down to his son or gave to a slave, but which he was free to take away. The holder had no right to dispose of this piece of property. The interpretation of the word παρούσιον was first given in a law under Emperor Augustus.<sup>2</sup>

The *Statute of Yevfrosin of Polotsk* explains *otaritsa* as an *osobina*<sup>3</sup>: "The *otaritsa* which is an *osobina*."<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Manuscript of the Moscow Synodal Library No. 455, p. 64. *Russian Historical Library*, Vol. 6, St. Petersburg, 1888, p. 208, Note.

<sup>2</sup> Фр. Любкер, Реальный словарь классической древности, 1888. (Fr. Lübker, *A Real Dictionary of Classical Antiquity*, 1888.)

<sup>3</sup> A derivative of *osoby*—detached, special.—Tr.

<sup>4</sup> Серебрянский, Очерки по истории монастырской жизни в Псковской земле, М. 1908, стр. 511. Устав Евфросина Полоцкого, § 5. (Serebryansky, *Essays on the History of Monastic Life in the Pskov Land*, Moscow, 1908, p. 511. *The Statute of Yevfrosin of Polotsk*, paragraph 5.)



*zakup's otaritisa*, then, is nothing but a plot of land allocated by the lord for his usage.

Our concept of the *zakup's* legal and economic status hinges on the explanation of another term in that part of the *Pravda* which we are now examining. That is the *kupa*. ("...but the lord who gave him the plough and the harrow, from him also he takes the *kupa*...") Various opinions have been voiced on this score, particularly in recent times.

After some hesitation, I conclude that the *kupa* is a sum of money which the *zakup* receives from the lord when the agreement between them is concluded. Such an interpretation of the *kupa* is very old and widely accepted. That was the way Karamzin interpreted it,<sup>1</sup> and it has now been accepted by most scholars.

This opinion is supported by a number of weighty arguments. It can be contradicted only by the fact that the word "takes"<sup>2</sup> has the connotation of an action repeated systematically, while the word *kupa* as money received from the lord by the *zakup* does not allow such repetition. However, this "contradiction," I believe, is removed by Professor G. O. Vinokur's apt remark that Russian verbs in the imperfective aspect often specify an action which denotes some form of constant relationship. Thus, the phrase: "He rents one of his rooms,"<sup>3</sup> means that "he had rented it once and continues to enjoy that right." He suggests therefore that we translate our text as follows: "the lord... from whom he has taken the *kupa*."

The common root in the words *zakup* and *kupa* lends additional support to the above interpretation. It was a sum of money with the aid of which the recent *smerd* acquired a new social shell and became a *zakup*.

Arts. 59-62, which deal with instances when the lord,

<sup>1</sup> N. M. Karamzin, op. cit., Note 92.

<sup>2</sup> The original reads *yemlet*.—Tr.

<sup>3</sup> The Russian is „он у него снимает комнату".—Tr.

exceeding his rights, inflicted certain injuries on the *zakup*, also help to understand the *zakup's* social nature. Here are the "injuries" which the lord was liable to inflict on the *zakup*: 1) he can effect a change in his own favour of the sum given the *zakup* at the conclusion of the agreement between them; 2) he can change (in his own favour, naturally) the size of the plot set aside for the *zakup* (the so-called *otaritsa*) and, possibly, take it away from him without sufficient justification; 3) he can attempt to exploit the *zakup* by selling or hiring him out; finally, 4) he can beat him up "without reason" or "when drunk, without any offence having been committed by the latter." The remark by Vladimirovsky-Budanov to the effect that Arts. 59-62 refer to the *zakup* in general, to any kind of *zakup*, appears to be highly pertinent with the exception of the article on the *otaritsa*. It is scarcely possible that a plot was given to the urban *zakup* who worked in his master's bailey. I consider the general meaning of these articles to be clear and unquestionable.

Art. 64 considers a case of a *zakup* stealing from an outsider and not from his master. The responsibility rests with the lord, but the *zakup* is, as a result, turned into a slave.

Art. 66 of the *Russkaya Pravda* flatly forbids the *khlop* to serve as witness. It allows the *zakup* to act in this capacity when necessary in minor litigations.

This is all we know of the *zakup*.

Our observations therefore enable us to draw the following well-founded conclusions.

1. The *zakup* is one who is dependent on the feudal lord. 2. This dependency is established by an agreement accompanied by a payment of money by the lord to the *zakup*, a sum to be paid back if the latter wishes to leave his master. The *zakup's* term of bondage is arranged for a fixed period. 3. The *zakup* can be made to perform the most diverse work for his lord. The so-called *roleiny za-*



*akup* is connected entirely with his lord's agricultural holding. It would seem that this type of *zakup* was particularly numerous, or gave rise to the greatest number of court cases; in Vladimir Monomakh's *Statutes* he was given the most prominent place. The existence of the *roleiny zakups* is unimaginable without the landlord's bailey and its economy: the *zakup* ploughs the lord's arable land with the latter's plough, and harrows it with the lord's harrow using the lord's horse, tends the lord's horses, drives them into his bailey and then into the stable, and is generally at the lord's beck and call. At the same time he has his own holding on a plot given to him by the lord. A clearer picture of the exploitation of the *zakup* could scarcely be given. It is above all one of the forms of *corvée*.

The *zakup*, then, is by origin generally a *smerd*, deprived of the means of production and forced by economic circumstances to seek a source of subsistence from the large landowners. This is a symptom of the degradation of the village community under the impact of feudal relations.

There can scarcely be any doubt that the *zakup* is a kind of *ryadovich*, and a part of the lord's *chelyad*, working in his lord's bailey side by side with the *kholop*.

The *Russkaya Pravda* enables us to study yet another kind of *ryadovich*. Its Art. 111 reads: "And in the *vdach*<sup>1</sup> is not a *kholop*, neither for corn, nor for an appendage, but if he fails to work his year, he must return what was given him in kindness; but if he works it off he is not guilty." The meaning of this article may be rendered as follows: a debt, whether of corn or money, does not turn the debtor into a slave; if the working man desires to leave his master before the expiration of the term he must either work off his debt within a specified term or return it.

<sup>1</sup> The *Pravda* text is imperfect. The Myasnikovsky Copy reads „а вдачену“, while the Fourth Troitsk Copy has both the „А в дачь“ and the „А вдачь“ variants.

Vladimirsky-Budanov thinks that this is a "source of one type of *zakup*."<sup>1</sup> Sergeyevich cites the Musin-Pushkin Copy as follows: "He who has given a price is not a *kholop*..."<sup>2</sup> and believes that this article refers to "workers hired for a period of a year, who receive a year's wages in advance. These wages are paid either in kind (corn, or something to supplement the hire money), or in money (*vdá tsenu*)."<sup>3</sup>

Sergeyevich's interpretation is scarcely acceptable. In the first place, the meaning of the word "appendage" remains obscure. It could be understood as something quite different. Thus, Vladimirsky-Budanov tentatively takes it to mean "interest," which may be correct.

The article as a whole does not deal with hire in the capitalist sense. It shows how the services of people were enlisted with the aid of corn or money, which very naturally implies interest, while the *dacha* was one of the means of attracting labour power. The *vdach* enters the service of the lord to work off a debt within a specified term, which was not necessarily, as Sergeyevich believes, a year, for the word year (*god*) usually meant time in general, and the *Russkaya Pravda* uses the term *leto* to denote a definite period of time equivalent to our year: "And a woman with a daughter working for 12 *letos*, a *grivna* a *leto*,"<sup>4</sup> etc. Thus, it would be more natural to see this as a case of a poor man taking corn or money in advance and undertaking either to work off his debt within a specified term or returning it if he wishes to leave his master before the expiry of the term.

We should not ignore the term "in kindness" (*milost*) which may help us to clarify the meaning of the article. The *milost* here is the corn or money; in short, everything

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 78, Note 160.

<sup>2</sup> The original reads: „Вдачену не холоп....”—Tr.

<sup>3</sup> V. Sergeyevich, op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>4</sup> Karamzin Copy of the *Russkaya Pravda*, p. 354.



a poor man received in hard times from a prosperous or wealthy man, which he was obliged to work off.

We know that people were enslaved in a similar manner as late as the 17th century.<sup>1</sup> The *Russkaya Pravda* regards this method of enslavement as a thing of the past.

In any case, the *kupa*, if we take it to mean the money which served to enslave the poor man, is similar to the *dacha*, mentioned in Art. 111 of the *Russkaya Pravda*.

### *Smerds*

The *smerd* is mentioned by the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* in its list of people working on the manorial estate. After we find out who the *smerd* was in general, we shall discover how he got there and what his status was.

Our scholars have written more about this than about any other subject of Rus history.

Yushkov made a most complete review of the literature dealing with this question. He also attempted to classify existing opinions.<sup>2</sup> I shall not, therefore, enumerate the varied arguments of each author, but will examine only the most striking.

I wish to demonstrate that this diversity of opinion on the *smerd* was due to the state of our pre-revolutionary scholarship and erroneous theoretical premises.

As an example, I quote the opinion of Leshkov, which

<sup>1</sup> "Godunov and many of his nobles . . . coerced many people into their service, and attracted others by kind words and presents . . . and many others, taking example from their betters and rulers, cast into bondage whomsoever they could and forced them by violence and torture to sign obligations of servitude, while yet others were enticed into drinking wine, and after three or four cups such would naturally become their slaves." [Сказание Авраамия Палицына, РИБ, т. XIII, стр. 482—483. (*The Lay of Avraamy Palitsyn, Russian Historical Library*, Vol. XIII, pp. 482-83.)]

<sup>2</sup> С. В. Юшков, К вопросу о смердах (*Concerning the Problem of the Smerds*) and his Феодальные отношения в Киевской Руси ("Ученые записки Саратовского государственного университета", т. I, вып. 4, 1923 и т. III, вып. 4, 1925.) (*Feudal Relations in Kiev Rus. Uchoniye Zapiski Saratovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. I, Issue 4, 1923 and Vol. III, Issue 4, 1925.)

is not without interest. "Considering the articles of the *Statute (Russkaya Pravda—Author)*," he writes, "according to which every *smerd* who died childless gave the prince the right to inherit his property; or according to which anyone who judged a *smerd without the prince's permission* was liable to punishment; and again, according to which the property of the *smerds* was constantly contrasted to the property of the prince, e.g., the *smerd's horse* to the *prince's horse*, and the *smerd's beehives* to the *prince's beehives*; according to which there were *special dues from the smerds*, who pay *prodazha* to the prince, we conclude that the *smerds* were the *prince's men*; and *could only be held by the prince*, much the same as the *kholops* and *zakups* were owned by others. They may have been prisoners of war settled on the lands of the prince, or of the state, as was the case later in the Novgorod land."<sup>1</sup>

According to Leshkov, the *smerds* could therefore be owned only by the prince, while the other landowners held only *kholops* and *zakups*.

In the *Russkaya Pravda* itself the *kholops* are presented as being princely, boyar and monastic,<sup>2</sup> not to mention the Novgorod sources, which conclusively disprove Leshkov's assertion. (He attempts to deprive the prince of his *kholops* in a most arbitrary fashion.) Leshkov's entire argument collapses as soon as we envisage the prince not only as the head of the state, but also as a lord of the manor. It transpires that the prince as lord of the manor owns land, *apiaria* and other resources, that the prince has his own estate, which is separate from the holdings of the peasants, who are his bondmen in the *demesne*, and that the princely estate is worked by bondmen, the *chelyad* discussed above. In other words, we shall have to admit that the prince as a landowner does

<sup>1</sup> V. Leshkov, *The Russian People and the State*, pp. 156-57. (*Leshkov's italics throughout*.)

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 46.



not differ in principle from other large landowners, who were advised by Daniil Zatochnik not to acquire lands in the immediate neighbourhood of the princely demesne, since the menials of the prince, taking advantage of the authority of their master, took many liberties in their relations with his more modest neighbours. Thus, if we consider the social and political relations of Kiev Rus in another light, the interpretation of the term *smerd* will necessarily be different from that given by Leshkov, and the whole of the *Russkaya Pravda* will tell a different story.

Leshkov's opinion is partly supported by Nikolsky, whose paper appeared a year later. He admits that the sources do not give a direct answer to the question of what were the *smerds*. He then reasons: "If the prince took the property of a sonless *smerd* who died, he, therefore, had a certain *right* to do that, just as the *smerds* were obliged to submit to that right, i.e., relinquish their property." But instead of defining the right that gave the prince the property of a sonless *smerd* after his death, the author, having solved the problem for himself, writes: "In substance, and according to the direct meaning of the statute on the *smerd's inheritance*, we must admit that the *smerds* were under obligation to the prince and, consequently, directly dependent on him."

The author, nevertheless, poses the question: "What did this dependence amount to?" But his answer is not very satisfactory. He asserts that when the itinerant Varangian princes settled down they occupied free lands which "became one of the main sources" of income for the state in place of the former tribute. The princes began to settle these lands with various kinds of people, including prisoners of war, slaves, and pauperized freemen so that they should be cultivated. These are "the *smerds*, the lowest, working, landless class. They were like hirelings, *zakups* of the prince, working for the prince in return for corn and, therefore, obliged to put all their energies at his disposal in return for the land, corn, life, keep and pro-

tection which the prince gave them and which they enjoyed as shelterless and defenceless people."<sup>1</sup>

Kluchevsky considers all princely land to be state land. He considers that the *smerd* lived only on state land and therefore calls him a state peasant. He thinks that the *Russkaya Pravda* uses the word *smerd* in a dual sense: it is a "free commoner" in general, and a free peasant in particular. The *Pravda* points to the direct relationship between the *smerd* and the prince: the prince inherited the property of the *smerd* who left no sons. Later, during the 13th and 14th centuries, in the Novgorod and Pskov regions, the term *smerds* was applied to free ploughmen, who used government land, i.e., to state peasants. It appears that the term had a similar meaning at the time of the *Russkaya Pravda*: the *smerd* was a free ploughman living on princely land."<sup>2</sup>

In 1935, these views were defended by Chernov in his article "About the Rus *Smerds* of the 11th-13th Centuries."

A different view of the *smerd* is supplied by a group of scholars, including Vladimirsky-Budanov, Samokvasov, Pavlov-Silvansky and Maksimeiko. They admit the existence of two kinds of *smerds*: 1) the village *smerds*, living on the old community lands not yet assimilated by the feudal lords, and 2) the *smerds* dependent on the feudal lords. These authors differ on other aspects of the matter.

Vladimirsky-Budanov is inclined to regard the first group of peasants as belonging to the state, or to the prince,<sup>3</sup> while Pavlov-Silvansky views these "princely" *smerds* as belonging to an individual, since they are set-

<sup>1</sup> V. Nikolsky, op. cit., pp. 357-59. (*Nikolsky's italics.*)

<sup>2</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *A History of Estates in Russia*, p. 49. This idea was briefly expressed in his *Short Course of Russian History*: "The free peasants who lived on princely state land and tilled it with their own implements, were called *smerds*. (Op. cit., Vladimir, 1909, p. 40.)

<sup>3</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, pp. 34-36.



tled on the lands of the princely demesne and do not differ in principle from the boyar *smerds*.<sup>1</sup> Both authors admit the existence of adscript *smerds*, although they view these in a different light. The former classifies the *zakups*, the *polovniks* and the *izorniks* among the adscript *smerds*.

An examination of Samokvasov's peculiar terminology places him in the above group of scholars. He singles out the population of the urban communities whom the conqueror has turned into his subjects and who are his tributaries. At times he calls them the "*smerd* towns-folk" who constitute the lowest ranks of the Russian population of the period before the Tatar invasion. In Moscow, he thinks, they were called peasants. He notes the existence of peasants owned by individuals and calls them slaves. "In the period of the *Russkaya Pravda* the ploughmen in a state of bondage in the princely manors were called *smerds* in the narrow sense of the word." Later they became known as "court peasants."<sup>2</sup>

While stressing the freedom of the *smerds* ("the *smerds* are a free population," "the *smerds* may own property," etc.), Sergeyevich nevertheless admits that some *smerds* were settled on the lands of landowners and were obliged to work for them.<sup>3</sup>

Maksimeiko also admits the existence of two categories of *smerds*. In a paper *About the Smerds of "Russkaya Pravda"* he states that besides the princely *smerds* who lived in the prince's demesne, there were also privately owned *smerds*. He takes the *smerd* to mean a villager or a peasant in general.<sup>4</sup>

Nikitsky<sup>5</sup> may with several reservations be included in

<sup>1</sup> N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, pp. 222-25.

<sup>2</sup> D. Y. Samokvasov, op. cit., pp. 270, 286.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> M. Maksimeiko, *About the Smerds of "Russkaya Pravda."* (*Pratsi Komissii dlya Viuchuvannya Istorii Zakhidno-Ruskogo ta Vkrainskogo Prava*, Issue III, 1927.)

<sup>5</sup> A. H. Никитский, *Очерк внутренней истории Пскова*, СПб 1873 (Nikitsky, *Outline of Pskov's Internal History*, St. Petersburg, 1873.)

this group of scholars. "In Ancient Rus," he declares, "the *smerds* were people who enjoyed every right of the free estates. They were personally responsible for their crimes and paid legal fines, *viras* and *prodazhas*. Judging from his terminology, the author means the *smerds* of the *Russkaya Pravda*. In his further writings he deals exclusively with the Pskov and Novgorod *smerds*.

It may well be that Nikitsky discerns certain peculiarities in the condition of the Pskov and Novgorod *smerds* as compared with those of Kiev. He stresses that they are tributaries, and points out that they are the "*smerds proper*," who, he believes, lived "on the lands of Lord Pskov." Further on he says: "The *smerds*, it appears, were in less advantageous circumstances (than the *polovniks*—*Author*). In any case, *Pravda's* enactments (he means the *Pskov Court Deed*—*Author*) had no bearing on the *smerds* since the obligations of the latter to the *landowner* were stipulated in a special so-called *Smerd Deed* which together with other papers was kept in the archives of the Troitsk Cathedral."<sup>1</sup> The author fails to explain the relation between the "lands of Lord Pskov" and those of the other "landowners." We are unable, therefore, to discover his precise views on the *smerd*. In another paper he declares: "In ancient times, *smerds* were people who had no personal land and had to live on the land of others."<sup>2</sup> At the same time, he notes the existence of "peasant land tenure." "It would be unfair to assume that individual peasant land tenure disappeared entirely in that period. (13th century—*Author*.) Far from disappearing, it continued to be in evidence."<sup>3</sup> It would appear that Nikitsky is also inclined to include these peasant landowners among the *smerds*. One must, however, be cautious,

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<sup>1</sup> A. I. Nikitsky, op. cit., pp. 278, 282. (Italics mine.—*Author*.)

<sup>2</sup> А. И. Никитский, История экономического быта Великого Новгорода, М. 1893, стр. 41. (A. I. Nikitsky, *The History of Everyday Economics in Great Novgorod*, Moscow, 1893, p. 41.)

<sup>3</sup> A. I. Nikitsky, *Outline of Pskov's Internal History*, pp. 278, 281.



because the author makes no clear-cut statements on the subject.

If we take the trouble, however, of summarizing his views we shall be faced with three categories of rural population who can be classified as *smerds*: 1) tillers, who "rented land from individual landowners," 2) "the *smerds* proper, living on the lands of Lord Pskov," i.e., on state lands which, however, were assimilated by the big landowners to a great extent by the period in question (as becomes clear from the author's explanation on p. 282), and finally, as stated in his *History of Everyday Economics in Great Novgorod*, 3) peasant proprietors.

Presnyakov devoted much attention to the problem. His well-argued criticism served to destroy a conglomeration of prejudices in our historical papers, but he failed to present an exhaustive view of his own. He sided with the prevailing opinion that "the word *smerd* denotes the entire mass of the rural population," but it appears that at the same time he admitted the existence of *smerds* dependent on the prince, *smerds* of the princely demesne. But after summing up his observations he arrived at a very gloomy conclusion: "The solution of this problem (of the *smerds*—*Author*) presents well-nigh insurmountable obstacles. It appears that it must remain controversial for a long time, possibly for ever, because of the paucity of facts at our disposal; a few scattered remarks in the chronicles and the *Russkaya Pravda*."<sup>1</sup>

For many years this problem was in some respects successfully studied by Yushkov. He is to be credited with a study of the legal status of the dependent *smerds*. Our only difference is that, while admitting the existence of free peasantry in Kiev Rus, he refuses to see it under the term *smerd*, which, I believe, includes both the free and dependent *smerds*. Yushkov does not regard the term *smerd* as an equivalent of the later term peasant, which

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., p. 287 et al. Also his *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I, pp. 192-93, etc.

was used to denote two states in the course of its history: the independent and the dependent peasantry.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of my account I shall have to deal with the arguments of several authors, including Yushkov.

Of late, papers dealing with the general history of the Ukraine and Kiev Rus have given prominence to the problem of the *smerds* and I believe this problem is now on the way to a solution.

With this I conclude my brief review of the discussion of the *smerds* as it stands today and pass on to an examination of the substance of the problem itself.

The reasons for previous failures to solve the problem lay, and in part continue to lie, not so much in the lack of sources, as in an incorrect approach, i.e., not so much in the matter, as in the method.

There is every reason to assume that Lenin considered the *smerds* to be peasants who were not a homogenous mass as regards economic and legal status. This is indicated by his statements on the subject: "And the 'free' Russian peasant in the 20th century is still forced to enter the servitude of the local landlord—in *precisely the same way* as was done by the *smerds* (as the peasants were called in the "*Russkaya Pravda*") when they 'signed up' with the landlord!"<sup>2</sup> In Russia "*otrabotki* have continued almost since the rise of Rus (the landowners forced the villeins into bondage as far back as the time of *Russkaya Pravda*)."<sup>3</sup> In Lenin's opinion, feudalism existed in Rus from the 9th century.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, Lenin also did not regard all the *smerds* as bondmen; only some of them were serfs.

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Concerning the Problem of the Smerds*. (*Uchoniye Zapiski Saratovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. I, Issue 4, 1923); also his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*; and *The Social and Political System and Law in the Kiev State*, Moscow, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 12, p. 237. (*Italics mine.—Author.*)

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Moscow, 1957, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 20, p. 348.



It can scarcely be doubted that Lenin assumes the existence in that period of two categories of *smerds*—the dependent *smerds*, the serfs, and the independent, free *smerds*.

The brief historiographical survey given above shows that many scholars sought to find a single legal definition for all the *smerds*. Since the sources do not in fact warrant such an approach, some scholars have given up the attempts to find a precise definition as hopeless.

I believe that we shall discard our attempts to find a single legal definition of this phenomenon which was not and could not have been uniform in reality, but was in a state of flux, inevitably undergoing change in the course of its development. We should bear in mind that the legal status of the peasants was complex, varied and in a constant state of flux. It is our task to discover the *smerd's* status in the historical system of production in every period under examination.

In the economic sense, the peasant is an immediate producer who owns the implements of production and has a holding of his own, which he needs to put his labour into effect and produce the means for his subsistence. He is independently engaged in tillage, as well as in the rural and household industries connected with it,<sup>1</sup> in contrast to the slave, who uses the lord's means of production and is fully owned by his lord.

Peasants can be either free tillers, or dependent in varying degree and form on the landowners, whether secular or ecclesiastic. In the period when society is being feudalized the general trend in the free peasant's fate is for him to be turned into a dependent peasant, who pays quitrent, does corvée and even becomes a serf.

Thus, in Germany, there were a certain number of free peasants in the 12th and 13th centuries remaining only to the east of the Rhine. But by that time, the bulk of the peasants had been turned into serfs by the feudal lords.

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1950, p. 803.

However, whether free or dependent, the peasant retains his economic nature: he is always a tiller who owns the means of production. This is the only exhaustive definition of his class.

The Kiev and the Novgorod *smerd* is nothing but a peasant who comes under this definition. There is no other interpretation of either the *Russkaya Pravda* articles, or the well-known texts of the chronicles. The fact that it is impossible to reduce the *smerd* to a uniform legal status is no reason for despair since we find *smerds* not only as free members of the community, but also as bondmen, uprooted from the community. *Smerds* were turned into bondmen along with the community, when community land with its population fell into the hands of the landowner—whether prince, man-at-arms, boyar or a church establishment. The nature of the dependence should not be considered homogenous in every case,<sup>1</sup> like the variety of terms used to denote the peasant mass. I do not propose to cite fully all the well-known statements of our sources on the *smerds*, but shall single out those which may suffice to throw light on this obscure problem.

Proceeding from the assumption that there is no difference in principle between the social nature of the Kiev and the Novgorod *smerds*, I base my conclusions both on the Novgorod and the Kiev records, taking due account, of course, of the peculiarities in the history of southern and northern Rus.

### *Smerds—Free Community Members*

I use this term to designate the bulk of the rural population throughout Rus which remained independent of individual landowners and was subject only to the jurisdiction of the state.

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<sup>1</sup>By this assertion I do not at all intend to negate the importance of juridical factors in the status of any of the social classes or the intra-class strata in feudal society.



I must note that the documents which I use to study the free *smerds* do not always single out this category. The sources often speak of them in general, without classifying them. It is often difficult to discern just what *smerds* are meant particularly when the sources speak of their state dues since taxes were paid by free and dependent *smerds* alike. But there are a number of documents, analysed below, which clearly speak of *smerds* who are free members of the community.

It is highly indicative that in some sources the term *smerd* covers the entire rural population engaged in agriculture and organized in communities. Such usage would be out of the question if *smerd* meant only that section of the population which was dependent on the lords.

Judging by all the extant texts of the treaties between Novgorod and its princes ("And a merchant shall pay taxes and render service in his own hundred, and a *smerd* in his own *pogost*. Such is the age-long practice in Novgorod"), the *smerds* have since olden times constituted the bulk of the taxed rural population of the Novgorod *pogosts* ("such is the age-long practice").

Elsewhere in these treaties we find a no less characteristic contrast between the *smerds*, as the rural population, and the towns-folk ("no *zakladniks* shall be accepted, either from among the *smerds*, or from among the *kupchinas*"). Here too the deeds indicate that the practice was age-long. When there is need for a comprehensive designation of the entire Novgorod population, the rural as well as the urban, the deeds use the terms *smerd* and *kupchina*, with the former doubtlessly denoting the bulk of the rural population. A similar usage is also found at a later period.

We find the *smerds* who are members of a community in a Pskov 13th-century deed: "...Lochko and Ivan and all the Rozhitsky folk stood against Radish and Kuzma and the Spasovsky monks in litigation for a peat bog, asserting that the monks and Kuzma and Radish began to

deprive Lochko and Ivan and the Rozhitsky folk of peat; and they produced a *smerd* deed showing that the peat belonged to Lochko and Ivan and all the Rozhitsky folk...<sup>1</sup> Clearly, Lochko and Ivan represent all the people of Rozhitsky, and all are undoubtedly *smerds*.

The free *smerds* as members of a community are described in the 1375 Deed published some time ago: "Now they drew up a peace deed with the Chelmuзhsky boyar Grigory Semyonovich and his children... the bailiff of Vymochensk *pogost* Artemei, nicknamed Orya, with his relatives, and two Shungsky *smerds*, Ivan Gerasimov and Vasilei, nicknamed Stoivov Glebov and Ignatei, nicknamed Igocha, and Osafei, the children of Perfiry, and all the Shungsky folk... established peace and determined a boundary in the Chelmuзhsky *pogost* (a description of the controversial boundaries follows)... and we are not to seize that land of Grigory, nor infringe the boundary.... And all that land and water and boundary shall be owned by the Chelmuзhsky boyar Grigory and his children for ever."<sup>2</sup> If we accept this deed as authentic, a fact I do not doubt, we shall have to note the description of the Shungsky *smerds* who owned land as a community and were engaged in some controversy over it with their neighbour, the Chelmuзhsky boyar, which ended in a peaceful settlement and a new delineation of the boundaries.

There is another similar agreement between the Archimandrite Grigory of Yuriev Monastery and the peasants of Robichinskaya *volost* in 1458-1472: "The people of Robichinskaya *volost* agreed with the Archimandrite Grigo-

<sup>1</sup>Rozhitsky Island on the west coast of Pskov Lake. In the 19th century there were five villages with 35 homesteads there.

<sup>2</sup>Чтения ОИДР, кн. I, М. 1868, Палеостров и его судьба и значение в Обонежском крае, стр. 138—139. (*Lectures on the Russian History and Antiquities Society at Moscow University*, Book 1, Moscow, 1868, *Paleostrov and Its Fate and Place in the Obonezhsk Territory*, pp. 138-39.) Cf. Н. С. Чаев Северные грамоты (ЛЗАК за 1927—1928 гг., вып. 35, стр. 157, № 53). (N. S. Chayev, *Northern Deeds. Letopis Zanyatii Arkheograficheskoi Komissii* for 1927-1928, Issue 35, p. 157, No. 53.)



ry and with the priests and the monks of Yuriev Monastery—Fyodor, Semyon Onkudinov, Ovdot Maksimov, Sofonty Vasilyev, Pyotr Sidorov and all the peasants of Robichinskaya *volost*—to deliver the allotted corn to the granary....”<sup>1</sup>

After mentioning several peasants of the Robichinskaya *volost*, there follows a generalization: “And all the peasants of Robichinskaya *volost*”; precisely as was the case in all previous deeds which have such generalizations as: “And all the Shungsky folk,” “and all the Rozhitsky folk.” It can scarcely be doubted that these are *smerds*, peasants acting in concert.

While the peasants of the Robichinskaya *volost* are in a state of feudal dependence on the monastery, this cannot be said of the Rozhitsky and the Shungsky *smerds*; nothing to that effect is said in the deeds. We can therefore assume that they are *smerds* who have not yet fallen into the hands of the feudal lord.

The *smerds* are tributaries. Nor can it be doubted that it is precisely such tributaries that the *Novgorod Annals* describe in the story of the campaign of the Novgorodites against Yugra in 1193 when the besieged Yugra appealed to the besiegers in the following words: “... do not destroy us, your *smerds* and your tribute.”<sup>2</sup>

In our ancient translations, the word *smerd* corresponds to the Greek ἑωρτής, γεωργός, i.e., an owner and a tiller.<sup>3</sup> It includes the bulk of the rural population. It covers also the bulk of the tributaries. The *First Novgorod Annals* for 1169 describe the campaign of the Novgorodites against Suzdal saying: “And the Novgorodites retreated, and

<sup>1</sup>Macarius, *A Description of the Novgorod Yuriev Monastery*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup>*First Novgorod Annals* for 1193.

<sup>3</sup>A. С. Лаппо-Данилевский, Очерк истории образования главных разрядов крестьянского населения в России (Сб. „Крестьянский строй“, т. I, СПб 1905, стр. 5, примечание 2). (A.S.Lappo-Danilevsky, *An Outline of the History of the Emergence of the Main Categories of Peasant Population in Russia*. Coll. *The Peasant System*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1905, p. 5, Note 2.)

then returned again, and took all the tribute, and from the Suzdal *smerds* another."<sup>1</sup> Another report for the year 1229 says: "Prince Mikhail came to Novgorod from Chernigov ... and he swore by the Cross to respect all the freedoms of Novgorod and all the deeds of Yaroslav; and to give the *smerds* who had run off to another land freedom from tribute for five years, and he ordered those who lived here to pay tribute as the previous princes had established." In this manner, Prince Mikhail hoped to get back the peasants who had flown from the persecutions of the vice-gerent Dmitr Miroshkinich, which, it seems, led to the insurrection of 1209.<sup>2</sup> There are numerous facts

<sup>1</sup>First Novgorod Annals, p. 149; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>First Novgorod Annals, p. 230; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 274. I think that the *Nikon Annals* distort the text, giving it as follows: "He granted a moratorium to all the poor and debtors on tribute for five years; as to those who ran off in debt, they pay tribute as the previous princes had established, but without annual interest." The text of the *Novgorod Annals* is sufficiently clear. We have here, undoubtedly, an incentive for fugitive peasants, whom the prince wished to return to their former domicile. Yushkov prefers the *Nikon* version to the *Novgorod* without, in my opinion, sufficient ground. (*Uchoniye Zapiski Saratovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. I, Issue 4, p. 73; S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, pp. 102-03.) We discover similar tactics used by the feudal lords in the 15th century. Grand Prince Vasily Dmitriyevich granted peasants who came to him from other principalities a moratorium of 10 years, and only 3 years to his own. (*Akty Arkheograficheskoi Ekspeditsii*, Vol. I, No. 21, 1423.) In similar cases, Prince Andrei Vasilyevich of Uglich granted moratoria of 10 and 20 years (*ibid.*, No. 102, 1476, etc.). The *smerds* are valued in Novgorod primarily as tributaries.

Yushkov considers that my punctuation of the text and, consequently, its interpretation causes an "insurmountable obstacle" and advances his own. He thinks that the phrase "and he ordered those" can only apply to the foregoing phrase: "Who had run off to another land, he ordered those...." I think that the "insurmountable obstacle" appears if we accept Yushkov's interpretation of the text, for then we have a phrase which is unwieldy in form and strange in content. In that case we shall have two subordinate clauses connected with "those," one of them preceding and the other following it. But that is passable; the worst is that these two clauses are contrary to each other in meaning and can in no way apply to one and the same word. According to Yushkov, the sentence should read thus: "Who had run off to another land, he ordered those, those who lived here ... to pay tribute." Yushkov's version gives rise to another difficult-



in the history of the Russian state which support this interpretation. The 1426 deed of Vasily Vasilyevich Tyomny (The Blind) to Metropolitan Photius says: "... From that monastery and from those manors the people have strayed in every direction, and when they return I shall not require any of my tribute for five years..."<sup>1</sup>

We discover a similar case in the 1525 deed of the Polish King Sigismund. The territory of Sebezhszkaya *volost*, which neighboured on the Pskov land, had suffered as a result of military action by Muscovite troops. Many peasants "had strayed from their homes" and fell into poverty. The king takes measures to restore the region to life and writes in his deed: "Desiring them (the peasants—*Author*) to return to their homeland ... we have granted them a moratorium of four years."<sup>2</sup> There are many such examples. The question is quite clear. The authorities use the most effective means. In order to secure the return of peasants who had fled for various reasons, they lighten their burden—for a definite period, since, of course, it would be entirely unthinkable from the viewpoint of the ruling class, to free the peasants from the payment of tribute altogether.

The existence of independent *smerds* in Kiev Rus becomes clear if we take into account facts pointing to the existence of free *smerds* who are members of communities, if we allow that whenever the documents mention *smerds* in general there is room for the independent *smerds* as well, and, finally, if we accept the well-known fact that

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ty, namely, the word "those" at one and the same time denotes the fugitives and those who stayed behind.

S. N. Chernov assumes that the *smerds* fled from state lands to privately-owned ones, but does not substantiate his assumption. (S. N. Chernov, *About the Rus Smerds of the 11th and 12th Centuries*, p. 771.)

<sup>1</sup> М. И. Горчаков, О земельных владениях всероссийских митрополитов... СПб 1871. Приложения, стр. 11—12. (M. I. Gorchakov, *The Landholdings of the Russian Metropolitans*, St. Petersburg, 1871, Addenda, pp. 11-12.)

<sup>2</sup> *Akty Zapadnoi Rossii*, Vol. II, No. 138, p. 159.

peasants remained free even in later times, when the number of feudal lords had substantially increased.

The assimilation of land with its population (*smerds*) by the feudal lords consisted precisely in that the latter systematically took possession of the land with the support of the state and subjugated the independent *smerds*. If we reject this process, which was repeated throughout Europe, we shall have to side with those who believe that the landowners took hold of free land and caught the vagrant folk with a view to settling them on their vacant holdings.

I think that there is absolutely no ground for such an assumption. That the *smerds* formed the largest part of the Ancient Rus population is also eloquently indicated by the toponymy. "There is not a single social definition," says the author of a special paper on the subject, "which has given such a variety of derivative forms reflected in the toponymy, as the word *smerd*." She notes the wide range over which this term extends. The first group of lands where this term is well known includes the Novgorod and Pskov regions, the north and north-east parts of the Dvina region and the north-west of the former Vyatka *gubernia*. The second group includes Volyn, Podolia, Kholmshchina, Galichina, Minor Poland, together with Poznan, Silesia and East Prussia. The term was also widely known in Byelorussian and Lithuanian lands, in Kovno, Vilno and Grodno. It is rarely met with in the Upper Volga regions (Tver, Vladimir and Yaroslavl), where it disappears. In the West, the term is also known in several parts of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that there is valid support for the opinion that the *smerds* formed the bulk of the rural population, although the term itself does not cover all its categories.

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<sup>1</sup> Е. А. Рыдзевская, Слово „смерд“ в топонимике („Проблемы источниковедения“, сб. 2, М.—Л, 1936; стр. 5—16). (Y. A. Rydzevskaya, *The Word "Smerd" in the Toponymy. Problemy Istochnikovedenia*, coll. 2, Moscow-Leningrad, 1936, pp. 5-16.)



Such is the opinion of most students (Maksimeiko, Chernov, Vladimirsky-Budanov, Dyakonov, etc.)

Yushkov is of a different opinion. In many of his papers, and particularly in his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus* and *The Social and Political System and Law in the Kiev State*, he tries to prove that our sources use the term *smerd* to denote only bondmen. Naturally, he gives his own interpretation of many of the sources quoted above. In addition, he advances the following arguments in support of his main contention: 1) the "rapid" disappearance of the term *smerd*, which would have been impossible if it denoted a great mass of the rural population; 2) he thinks that the *smerds* are contrasted with the ploughmen in the following text of *Nikon Annals*: "For the *gorod* Vladimir is not a separate principality, but only our suburb in which our *smerds* and *kholops* live: stone-masons, carpenters and ploughmen." Yushkov believes that this text shows that the word *smerd* does not cover the entire rural population; 3) in Vladimir Monomakh's *Precepts* the villagers are contrasted to the *smerds* in the following text: "They captured only one live villager and several *smerds*."

These seem to be Yushkov's main objections. In my opinion none of them invalidates the view which Yushkov attempts to refute.

1. The term *smerd* did not disappear "rapidly." This becomes clear if we look for it in places where it was widely used. It had no great circulation in the Volga and the Oka basins, as the toponymical facts presented by Rydzevskaya and the written records show. The Novgorod folk used the word to denote the rural population of the Suzdal land, while the people of Suzdal themselves, like those living in the territory around the Volga and the Oka, used the term very rarely. The term *smerd* used by the chroniclers in south and north-west Rus was replaced in the area between the two rivers by the terms *sirota* or peasant. Let us take, for example, the famous story of

the Dolob Congress which gives a classical description of the *smerd*. In the *Voskresensk Annals*, compiled in Muscovy in the thirties and forties of the 16th century,<sup>1</sup> it is given with the characteristic omission of the term *smerd*. "And Svyatopolk's men-at-arms declared: 'It will not do to start a campaign in spring, to starve the horses and sunder the *peasants* from their tillage.' And Vladimir Monomakh said: 'I marvel, comrades, that you pity the horses and the *peasant* land; and why not think that when the *people* begin to plough...'" Thus there is a sufficiently wide range of meaning in the term *smerds* who are at once peasants and people!

On the other hand, in places where this term had been in usage for a long time, as, for example, in Novgorod, it did not disappear until the end of Novgorod's independence. "And the merchant is under the jurisdiction of his hundred, and the *smerd* pays his taxes (to Novgorod) as of old," says the 1471 Treaty. This term was doubtless much longer used colloquially. Unfortunately, we do not know the vernacular, while the official documents began to use the terminology developed in Rus in the 13th and 14th centuries, after Novgorod's integration with Moscow where the term *smerd* was replaced by the term "peasant." The *smerds* are known under that name in Pskov as late as the eighties of the 15th century.

In the Ukrainian and Russian lands ceded to Lithuania and Poland this term was in evidence in the 14th and even in the 16th centuries. Thus we discover the term *smerd* in a translation of the *Vislitsa Statute*: (About the *Smerd* Who Assaults Another *Smerd*, Art. 56). Here the *smerd* is contrasted to the knight: "Many *smerds* are not allowed to go from one village to another without the permission of their master." (Art. 70, etc.)

Finally, this term was very much common in Moscow

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Шахматов, Обозрение русских летописных сводов XIV—XVI вв., 1938, стр. 370. (A.A. Shakhmatov, *A Survey of Russian Chronicles of the 14th-16th Centuries*, 1938, p. 370.)



in the 16th century. In his treatise on the inviolability of monastery property, Iosif Volotsky declares: "But some of the nobles hated me and said: Did this *smerd* bring it with him?" (meaning the monastery property).<sup>1</sup> Bersen-Beklemishev, who dared to voice his dissatisfaction with the new order of things to Vasily III, received the reply: "Get thee hence, *smerd*—I don't need thee!"<sup>2</sup>

2. The meaning of the action of the Rostov boyars against Vladimir *gorod* is quite clear too. The people of Rostov assert that Suzdal is not a *gorod*, but a suburb within their jurisdiction, where *their* bondmen—*smerds* and *kholops*—live. They then enumerate the latter according to trade. Stone-masonry, carpentry and ploughing are occupations of the *smerds* and *kholops*. There is absolutely no contrast here between the ploughmen and the *smerds*. Naturally, the *smerds* in this case are dependent people, of which more below.

3. Finally, Vladimir Monomakh's *Precepts* use the word *zemtsy*. Let us assume that it means villager. I must admit that we hear very little of these villagers even at a much later date (15th century). As far as our meagre sources indicate, they appear to be petty landowners, who are in better circumstances than the ordinary peasant, and who differ from the latter in that they exploit the labour of others on their small holdings. The *First Pskov Annals* for 1431 report that "the villagers of the Berezhskaya *volost* gave the artisans 300 rubles" (for building fortifications in Gdov).<sup>3</sup> The same place is much clearer in the *Second Pskov Annals*: "And they took 300 rubles for the stone wall from the villagers whose home town is

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<sup>1</sup> А. Павлов, Исторический очерк секуляризации церковных земель в России, ч. 1, Одесса 1871, стр. 55. (A. Pavlov, *An Outline of the Secularization of Church Lands in Russia*, Part 1, Odessa, 1871, p. 55.)

<sup>2</sup> *Akty Arkheograficheskoi Ekspeditsii*, Vol. I, No. 172.

<sup>3</sup> *Pskov Annals*, Issue I, 1941, p. 39.

Gdov."<sup>1</sup> The *zemtsy*, therefore, must be regarded as one of the lower groupings of the ruling class. They are holders of demesnes and not peasants. The distinction between the *zemtsy* and the *smerds* is correct, but it does not support Yushkov's view of the latter.

The donative deed granted to the *sirotas* of the Terpilov *pogost* in 1411 is very interesting in its terminology. It uses three synonyms to denote the population of the district, i.e., the *smerds*: "At a *veche*, held in Yaroslav's bailey, the *sirotas* of the Terpilov *pogost* were given a donative deed: they are to pay to the *posadnik* and the military a tax per plough according to the old deeds at 40 *bels*, and 4 measures of flour, and 10 loaves. And any peasant who goes from the Terpilov *pogost* to the Dvinskaya *sloboda* shall then have to pay his taxes as a *miryanin* in the Dvinskaya *sloboda*. And if any inhabitant of the Dvinskaya *sloboda* settles on the lands of the Terpilov *pogost*, he shall pay taxes in the Terpilov *pogost*."<sup>2</sup> Members of the Terpilov *pogost* are thus at one and the same time described as *sirotas*, peasants and *miryanye*. If we recall that the Novgorod records insist that the basic population of the *pogost* are *smerds*, we arrive at a highly interesting series: *smerd*—*sirota*—peasant—*miryanin*. Together with the texts just quoted we have: *smerd*—*sirota*—peasant—*miryanin*—people. This is a terminology which denotes the broadest strata of the rural population.

There is yet another approach to the problem. Let us assume for the moment, like Yushkov, that the *smerds* are merely one of the categories of the population dependent on the feudal lord, the so-called *homines pertinentes*. We are then faced with the question as to what the independent peasants were called. Where are they? Yushkov assumes the existence of such people. He speaks of the

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<sup>1</sup>Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles, Vol. V, St. Petersburg, 1851, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Akty Istoricheskie, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1841, No. 17, p. 26.



"free peasantry" in connection with his study of the growth of princely landholdings ("... the land massif increased as the princes turned the free peasantry into a dependent rural population."<sup>1</sup> However, he finds no name for this free peasantry. Elsewhere he says: "It was called *smerds*, wherever the *rural population* was finally turned from *tributaries* into the labour power of the princely demesne, or the church or boyar seignior."<sup>2</sup> Hence, according to the author, the free peasant population, paying tribute, are not *smerds*. They become that as soon as they are turned into a labour force dependent on the seignior.

However, Yushkov is inconsistent. On p. 128 he says: "Initially, when the *smerds* were not all dependent in the *feudal sense* and paid tribute ... i.e., approximately in the 9th and 10th centuries ..." (italics mine—*Author*). Here Yushkov closely approaches my view of the *smerds*, for he apparently admits that they were not always and not all feudal bondmen, and that some of them were free tributaries.

He singles out the Novgorod *smerds* and treats them differently from those of Kiev: "With time in Novgorod too the tributaries became known as *smerds*..."<sup>3</sup> But he believes that they had a specific relationship with the prince. It appears that this was the way in which the author interpreted the well-known report of the *Novgorod Annals* on the campaign of the Novgorod folk against Yugra: "The Yugra said cunningly: 'We are amassing silver and sable and other ornaments; so do not destroy your *smerds* and your tribute in vain.'"

I think that the Yugra, feigning submissiveness, called

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<sup>1</sup> S.V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, pp. 45, 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240. Unfortunately the author failed to elaborate this problem as thoroughly as he did the problem of the dependent *smerds*.

themselves *smerd* tributaries, considering that this is the most natural condition of the *smerds* who live in the *pogosts*. It is impossible to draw a line of distinction between the Novgorod and the Kiev *smerds*.

The *Russkaya Pravda*, which refers both to the Kiev and the Novgorod *smerds*, differentiates, as we have seen, between the serf and the free *smerd*. The latter is held personally responsible for his actions: "Such are the rates at which losses are made good to *smerds*, if they pay the prince *prodazha*." (Art. 45 of the *Extensive Pravda*.) It follows that not all the *smerds* pay *prodazha* to the prince, i.e., not all of them, but only the free are held responsible for their actions. The dependent *smerds* are excluded.

I have attempted to show that the *smerds* of Kiev Rus comprised the broad masses of the rural population, a part of which, as was the case among all European peoples, was being turned into bondmen and serfs in the process of feudalization.

This process was not completed in 9th-12th century Kiev Rus. Therefore we naturally find both free and dependent *smerds* at that time.

I have found it necessary to cite all these data to facilitate the examination of the circumstances in which the bulk of the rural population lived in the period when feudal relationships were developing in the state of Ancient Rus. It is no fault of ours if we are unable to answer all the questions facing us at the moment. But it is, nevertheless, clear at this juncture, that the *smerds* in Ancient Rus comprised the bulk of the rural population and went through the same stages in their historical development as the peasants of any country which was being or had been feudalized.

Independent *smerds* living in communities existed for many centuries in Northern Rus. They were known as *крестьяне* (peasants).



## Dependent Smerds

While most scholars regarded the *smerds* as the bulk of the rural population and did not doubt the existence of free *smerds*—some, indeed, considered them to include only free and independent peasants—the problem all the while of the dependent *smerds* remained in the background. While they were from time to time mentioned, the logical conclusions were not drawn. This much is clear from the brief survey given above.

Vladimirsky-Budanov wrote of "adscript" *smerds*. He held that the *Russkaya Pravda* and the chronicles "contain . . . indications of the lack of rights on the part of the *smerds*, but this applies to the *smerds* proper, i.e., the adscript *smerds*." "The free peasants were far from enjoying complete civil rights and they could easily be turned into adscript peasants. This adscription could either be temporary or permanent. The former was the agreement on the ploughman *zakup* mentioned by the *Russkaya Pravda*, when the *smerd* became a debtor of the landowner. . . ." "...Adscript *smerds* were already numerous in very early times: the earliest *Russkaya Pravda* lays down the same fines for the murder of a *kholop* and a *smerd*."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, while allowing the existence of free as well as dependent *smerds* in Kiev Rus, the author believes the latter to include not only *smerds* in the direct sense of the term, but also *zakup*s.

Pavlov-Silvansky wrote of real dependent *smerds*.<sup>2</sup>

Recent works on the subject include Yushkov's article *Concerning the Problem of the Smerds* and his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus* and the *Social and Political System and Law of the Kiev State*,<sup>3</sup> together

<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

<sup>2</sup> N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, op. cit., p. 222 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> See his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 101 et seq. and *The Social and Political System and Law of the Kiev State*, p. 287 et seq.

with Maksimeiko's *About the Smerds of the "Russkaya Pravda,"* etc.

These approach the problem from a different and, I believe, a correct angle. This, however, does not prevent me from disagreeing with some of the authors' statements. I will at once specify my point of difference with both authors: I distinguish two groups of *smerds*: 1) those who have not fallen into the hands of the landowners, and 2) those who are to some extent dependent on their lords.

Yushkov's arguments in support of the existence of dependent *smerds* with limited rights appear to be convincing. I entirely agree that the serfdom of *smerds* is a practice of long standing.<sup>1</sup>

The process of feudalization, which began in Rus much earlier, had produced very definite results by the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries. A considerable part of the *smerds* had already by then lost their peasant independence.

Because of their lack of rights as a category dependent on the feudal lord, the *smerds* are very much akin to the *kholops*. Let us now consider the evidence of the source-material on this subject.

The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, which is a princely *Pravda par excellence* and is designed above all to safeguard the interests of the prince's court and his estate, records important enactments concerning the *smerds*. It includes them among the bondmen dependent on the prince who live and work in his demesne: "And the murder of the princely *ryadovich* is subject to a fine of 5 *grivnas*, and that of the *smerd* and the *kholop* 5 *grivnas*." (Arts. 25 and 26.) This reveals what is meant by the *chelyad*, namely, *ryadovichy*, *smerds* and *kholops*.

But the solution of this important and interesting problem is complicated by the fact that the Troitsk Copy of the *Russkaya Pravda* and most of the other texts give

<sup>1</sup> *Uchoniye Zapiski Saratovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. 1, Issue 4, 1923; Yushkov, *Essays*, p. 102 et seq.



a different version of these articles, namely, "of a *kholop* belonging to the *smerd*."

This has been widely discussed, and with good reason, for this is one of the few sources which make it possible to understand the legal and economic status of the *smerd*. What he is (not in general, of course, but only in this context) depends on the interpretation of the text in question: is he a peasant, who has been relegated to the level of the *kholop* in social status, or a freeman owning *kholops*, i.e., a slave-holder exploiting a *kholop*?

As we have seen, the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, which gives this text, refers to the princely demesne and its economy with a variety of princely menials and immediate producers. It is very natural, therefore, to assume that we are here dealing with a *smerd* who works in the princely demesne side by side with the *ryadovichy* and the *kholops*, and not an independent person. This is also indicated by the fine, fixed at 5 *grivnas* for *smerd*, *ryadovich* and *kholop* alike.

Even if we assume that this *Pravda* refers to an independent *smerd*, there is every reason to doubt that he is a slave-owner. It may, of course, be assumed theoretically that an independent *smerd* can exploit another's labour, but this was such a rare phenomenon that the law would have scarcely mentioned it. All our sources show the *smerd* to have been a poor man who demands condescension.

This text has recently been studied in detail. Lyubimov, one of our leading authorities on the *Russkaya Pravda*, has presented two penetrating papers on the subject.<sup>1</sup> In the first he concludes that all the articles of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* which deal with the people in the demesne, from the *tiuns* to the *smerds* and *kholops*, and

<sup>1</sup> В. П. Любимов, Палеографические наблюдения над Академическим списком Русской Правды („Историк-марксист“ № 5, 1938, стр. 156—161). (V. P. Lyubimov, *Paleographic Examination of the Academic Copy of "Russkaya Pravda."* *Istorik-Marxist*, No. 5, 1938, pp. 156-61.) Also his Смерд и холоп („Исторические записки“ т. X, стр. 66—83.) (*Smerd and Kholop. Istoricheskiye Zapiski*, Vol. X, pp. 66-83.)

which were contained in the earliest text, which has been preserved and which was copied in the 15th century, was edited in order to present a uniform picture graphically. Consequently, the menials and immediate producers were regarded in the 11th and 12th centuries as a group dependent on the lord of the manor (a fact supported by the law itself).

This contention is conclusively proved in his other paper, where he examines the language of the *Pravda* and its contents.

As a result, I believe the controversy may be regarded as resolved and the text read as "of the *smerd* and the *kholop*."

It will be recalled that Art. 46 of the *Extensive Pravda* lists the slave-holders, including the prince, the boyar and church establishments. No mention is made of the *smerd* among them, and with good reason.

We find, on the other hand, numerous examples when the *smerd* and the *kholop* are dealt with together, proving that this joint treatment was common among the *Pravda*'s contemporaries.

Tatishchev's well-argued report says that in the 10th century the manors belonging to feudal lords were populated by *kholops* and *smerds*. He reveals that a treaty between Vladimir I and the Bulgarians forbade the latter to trade directly with the *smerds* and the *chelyad*. This right was apparently reserved exclusively for the feudal lords. A document of the 12th century, *Kirik's Inquiry*, supports Tatishchev's account. It states categorically that the manors were inhabited by the *smerds*. It is noteworthy that Kirik makes no mention of slaves. Obviously, the *smerds* comprised the bulk of the population. "I mentioned it for the benefit of the *smerds* who live in the manors," he says.

The princes demand that the sons of Rostislav return their *smerds* and *kholops*.<sup>1</sup> The people of Rostov speak haughtily of the people of Vladimir: "For Vladimir *gorod*

<sup>1</sup>*Ipaty Annals*, p. 181.



is not a separate principality, but one of our suburbs, where our *smerds* and *kholops* live. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

We find a similar situation much later in Novgorod, where that city's treaty with Casimir IV forbids *smerd* and *kholop* to complain against their masters. Treaties with neighbouring states include articles on the return of fugitive *smerds* and *kholops*.<sup>2</sup> The status of the *smerds* is described as being equally lowly in the well-known account contained in the *First Novgorod Annals*, which says that Prince Yaroslav, discharging the Novgorodites who helped him to seize the Kiev throne, "began to remunerate his warriors: the *starostas* received 10 *grivnas* each, the *smerds* a *grivna* each and the Novgorodites (i.e., the towns-folk—*Author*) 10 *grivnas* each."<sup>3</sup>

The copyists of the various versions of the *Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery* use the terms slaves and *smerds* alternately. Thus, the *Lay of the Holy and Reverend Fathers Fyodor and Vasily* describes how the latter made the devils work for the brethren. The humiliated devils "work as purchased slaves and carry firewood up the hill." Another version of this story uses the word *smerds* instead of slaves.<sup>4</sup>

Novgorod's treaty with King Casimir, which, it is true, was drafted in 1440, says: "Since we are friends, we should not stand one against the other in defence of fugitive *kholops*, slave women, debtors, robbers or *smerds*, but hand them over after an inquiry."<sup>5</sup> These *smerds* were to be handed over not as criminals, who are mentioned separately, but simply because they were *smerds*, who are

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<sup>1</sup>*Nikon Annals* for 1177.

<sup>2</sup>*Collection of State Deeds and Treaties*, Vol. 1, No. 87; *Akty Zapadnoi Rossii*, Vol. 1, No. 39.

<sup>3</sup>*First Novgorod Annals*, p. 84; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 175.

<sup>4</sup>*The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, pp. 118 and 230 (variants). This usage is possibly explained by the fact that in church parlance all menials were called slaves.

<sup>5</sup>*Akty Zapadnoi Rossii*, Vol. 1, No. 39.

here again considered side by side with the *kholops*. The Hanse merchants regard the Novgorod *smerds* as belonging to their lords, who are responsible for the *smerds'* crimes. "The *smerds* are yours," they tell the Novgorod boyars, "and you, therefore, must bear responsibility for them according to the law."<sup>1</sup>

The ties linking the *smerd* with the economy of the princely demesne are also revealed in the fact that the prince's horses apparently graze in the same meadow with those of the *smerd*, but are distinguished from the latter by a special brand, the *pyatno*.<sup>2</sup>

The *Pravda* forbids the torturing of *smerds*—the labour force of the princely demesne and the prince's bondmen—without "the prince's permission," like others who belong to the princely court, among them the *ognishchanin*, the *tiun* and the *mechnik*.<sup>3</sup> In 1071, soothsayers from among the *smerds* referred to this right when they told Yan Vyshatich: "We are to be judged by Svyatoslav, you can do nothing." There can here be no question of citizenship, because the people of Beloozero were also tributaries of Prince Svyatoslav. At the same time it is impossible to suggest that the prince's voivode could not as a rule judge the people of Beloozero without the prince's express permission. Apparently, the prince's *smerds* mentioned in this account were under the feudal jurisdiction of the princely demesne.

The princes dispose of their lands together with the *smerds* settled on them. We have no direct evidence of this, but there are fairly conclusive facts in support of this. In the thirties of the 13th century, the Ryazan princes Ingvar, Oleg and Yury, together with 300 boyars and 600 *muzhi*, gave "9 pieces of land with beehives, and 5 *pogosts*"

<sup>1</sup> "Smerdi vestri sunt et idcirco de jure tenemini respondere." Sartorius, *Urkundliche Geschichte des Ursprungs Hanse*, Issue 2, Vol. XXIII, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Academic Copy, Art. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 33.



with 1,010 "families" which were, undoubtedly, not *kholops*, but peasants, or, as the Kiev and Novgorod terminology has it, *smerds* to a monastery.<sup>1</sup> We find yet another proof that a part of the *smerds* were already in feudal bondage in the period from the 10th to the 12th centuries, if we accept Yushkov's interpretation<sup>2</sup> (which is, of course, open to doubt) of Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich's deed, granted to the Panteleimon Monastery in 1136-1154. It mentions "the manor of Vitoslavitsy and Smerdy"; the term "Smerdy" may be understood to mean a social class, and not a geographical name.

The status of *smerds* who belonged to other feudal lords, was in essence similar to that of the *smerds* in the princely demesne, and could not have been radically different. The men-at-arms are unquestionably interested in the *smerds*, their horses and their arable land.

There can hardly be another interpretation of an item in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1111. This tells how Prince Svyatopolk and his men-at-arms arrived at Lake Dolob at the invitation of Vladimir Monomakh. "They sat in one tent, Svyatopolk with his men-at-arms and Vladimir with his. And there was silence. And Vladimir said: 'Brother, thou art older, tell me how we are to achieve the security of the Rus land.' And Svyatopolk said: 'Brother, thou tell me.' And Vladimir said: 'As I want to say, that thy men-at-arms and mine too will say: he wishes to ruin the *smerds* and the *smerds*' arable land.'"<sup>3</sup> These details are not mentioned in the item for 1103 on the same subject but they are very revealing. How else are we to explain this concern of the men-at-arms in the *smerds*' arable land, if these *smerds* did not live in the manors of the men-at-arms and were not obliged to render to their lords a part of their surplus labour in some manner? This

<sup>1</sup> *Akty Istoricheskie*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Feudal Relations in Kiev Rus. Uchoniye Zapiski Saratovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, Vol. III, Issue 4, 1925, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 191.

obligation is hinted at in other accounts in the same chronicle.

In 1146 "the Kievites pillaged ... the houses of Igor's and Vsevolod's men-at-arms, and their manors, and their cattle..." We find Prince Izyaslav saying to his men-at-arms in 1150: "You followed me out of the Rus land, loosing your manors and your property." In 1148, the same Izyaslav tells his men-at-arms about the Chernigov princes: "We have burnt down their manors and all their property, and they will not come to meet us; let us go to Lubech where all their property is."<sup>1</sup> As we have previously seen, these manors were inhabited by *chelyad* and *smerds*. It is also clear that it rests with the men-at-arms and not with the prince to decide on the requisitioning of the *smerds'* horses. The same can be said, apparently, of the military service of the *smerds* themselves, who depend on their feudal lords.

An addendum to Arts. 13 and 14 of the *Extensive Pravda* is additional indirect evidence that the relationships within the princely and the boyar demesnes did not differ in principle. It speaks of the prince's men—the *selsky* and *ratai tiuns* and the *ryadovich*: "And the *selsky tiun* of the prince or a *ratai tiun* (are covered by) a 12 *grivna* (fine), and a *ryadovich* 5 *grivnas*." "And the same for those of a boyar."

The clear-cut statement in this addendum may be extended to cover the articles dealing with other particulars of the princely demesne.

Much controversy has been aroused by Art. 90 of the Fourth Troitsk and other copies of the *Extensive Pravda*, which says: "If a *smerd* dies childless (I quote the Fourth Troitsk Copy), his property shall go to the prince. If he have daughters at home, they shall be given a part thereof; but if they are married, they shall receive no part." The *smerd* in this case may be either one who is

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<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, pp. 233, 284, 254.



not directly dependent on the feudal lord and is a free member of a rural community, or he may be a *smerd* of the prince, a serf. If we assume the latter, the text is clear, but there arises the question of whether this rule is also to be applied to those *smerds* who did not belong to the prince, but to other feudal lords. The answer given in the *Statutes* of Prince Yaroslav Vladimirovich on church courts, which speak of all "domestics" both in church and monastery, is apparently affirmative. It is very natural to include the *smerds* in this category. The property of these people "goes to the bishop," apparently in the absence of male successors.<sup>1</sup>

Sergeyevich considers it possible to draw a parallel between the bishop's right to the inheritance and the right of the *boyars* to inherit the property of their childless men-at-arms. He quotes the Pushkin Copy of the *Russkaya Pravda*, which he favours: "And in the *boyar* retinue, the prince does not inherit..."<sup>2</sup> But this does not apply to the prince's *smerds*, but to his men-at-arms, who at one time used to leave their property to the prince, their suzerain, if they were childless.

I believe that we shall be approaching a correct solution of the question of the childless *smerd's* inheritance if we consider a similar article of the *Polskaya Pravda*. This states quite definitely that the prince, as a prince, had little say in this matter, and that this rule applied to every feudal demesne of the period. This is the law of the dead hand well known in Western Europe. I use the analogy with the *Polskaya Pravda* simply to clarify Art. 90 of the *Russkaya Pravda*.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the stipulations in the *Lex salica* excluding women from land inheritance: the entire *terra salica* was handed down to the male members of the family. (Chap. LIX.)

<sup>2</sup> В. И. Сергеевич, Лекции и исследования по древней истории русского права, СПб 1910, стр. 558. (V.I. Sergeyevich, *Lectures and Investigations in the History of Ancient Rus Law*, St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 558.)

If a peasant (*Gebuer*) dies sonless his master (*Herr*) takes his property (*Gut*). However, he must give his wife her pillows and the coverings for the bench and what is called the *denicze* on which she sleeps. As an act of grace he must give her (*eczliche Gnade*) from the property (*Gute*) a cow, or three swine, and some other cattle for her keep. . . .

If a daughter is left, the one who inherits, whether the son, or the master (*Herr*), must give her a dowry. (Art. XXII.)

And if a *smerd* dies (childless) his property goes to the prince.

And if he have daughters at home they shall be given a part thereof; but if they are married, they shall receive no part. (Art. 90.)

The dependence of the peasant is similar in both *Pravdas*. The lot of the Polish and Russian peasant was in the main similar. The situation was the same not only in the two contiguous Slavonic lands, but also throughout Europe. While the *chelyad*, as the main contingent of the labour force exploited in the lordly demesnes, had a tendency to disappear, the exploitation of the immediate producer, who lived in the manor on his own plot of land, was being intensified. The attention of the feudal lords was being increasingly transferred to assimilating new expanses of land and increasing the numbers of their subjects. These tendencies were clearly evident as early as the 13th and 14th centuries. It was then that the attitude of the landowner to the inheritance of childless *smerds* underwent a radical change. But it can scarcely be doubted that in the 11th and 12th centuries every Rus feudal landowner, and not the prince alone, inherited the property of his sonless peasants.

These changes are strikingly evident in the *Vislitsa* (Polish) *Statute* of the 14th century, which was specially



translated into Russian and introduced as law in Galich Rus, which had shortly before been integrated with the Polish state.

#### *Vislitsa Statute*

(Gives an old law of *Pol-skaya Pravda* similar to that of *Russkaya Pravda*) ... *Cum aliqui kmetones de hac vita absque prole decedunt, ipsorum omnia, bona mobilia et immobilia nomine. Puścizna domini<sup>1</sup> eorundem consveverint occupari.*

#### *Its Galich Variant*

If any person, or a *kmet* (*smerd*) dies childless, his master inherits his property.

### THE NEW LAW

*Unde nos eandem abusivam consuetudinem reprobantes, statuimus: quod de bonis eorundem decedentium, si tantum reperiatur in ejisdem (bonis)<sup>2</sup> calix pro marca cum, dimidia dandus ecclesiae parochiali comparetur reliqua vero bona ad proximiores consanguineos vel affines, cessante quolibet impedimento, devolvatur (Helcel. Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki, paragraph 20).*

On the village *pustovshchina* or the *mestskaya*. If any person, or a *kmet* dies childless, his master inherits his property.

We now set down the following practice: from that estate a chalice worth a *grivna* and a half shall be given to the parish church and the rest be given to his relatives or friends.

It is obvious that the *Vislitsa Statute* describes the law of the dead hand which is alike in both *Pravdas* (the Russian and the Polish) as *abusiva consuetudo*.

There is no need to explain why this custom, which existed throughout Europe for a long time, was viewed as noxious and even as meaningless and unjust in the 14th-century Poland. This subject transcends the framework of an investigation of Kiev Rus.

I have quoted these texts to show that: 1) the Polish

<sup>1</sup> Most of the variants have *domini* in this sentence.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the variants have *bonis*.

and Rus feudal lords viewed the dependent *smerd* and their right to his land if he died sonless in a similar light, and that 2) feudal relationships developed along similar lines in Poland and Rus.

I give this example from Polish history only because the *Russkaya* and the *Polskaya Pravdas* converged in the compilation of the Galich version of the *Vislitsa Statute* and could be used in this case because of the similarity of their content.

In studying the economic and legal status of the *smerd*, I believe we shall be justified in leaving the confines of the sources which deal with him specifically. There are grounds for comparing the *smerd* with *sirotas*, *syabrs* and *lyudi*.

*Sirotas* appear to be *smerds* who live in north-east Rus, but it must be admitted that the terminology is far from consistent and the term *smerd* is practically unknown. It is only used by the people of Novgorod in reference to the rural population of Suzdal. The word *sirota* is current in the Novgorod and in the Suzdal lands. It was officially used in the latter area up to the 15th century. Peasants throughout the Rus' state often called themselves that as late as the 16th and 17th centuries. As in the case of *smerds*, we find both free and dependent *sirotas*.

Archbishop Ilya of Novgorod mentions dependent *sirotas* in the 12th century. In his *Precepts* he declares: "Do not appoint a great penance to *sirotas*, for the statutes say: 'Those who bear the labour yoke should be given only half the penance.' Ye must not burden with penance those who repent, for the yoke of Christ is light." The Archbishop forbids his clergy to impose a heavy penance on *sirotas* who are engaged in forced labour, who are not free to act as they like and therefore find it impossible to perform such penance.

Luka Zhidyata, another Novgorod Bishop, appealed in 1036: "Remember the errant, and the poor, and the imprisoned, and be kind to *your sirotas*."



Serapion, Bishop of Vladimir in the 13th century, mentions free orphans-*sirotas* and their enslavement. He refers to people, who "are insatiable in their quest for wealth" and who enslave and sell free *sirotas*.<sup>1</sup>

The Pushkin Copy of the *Russkaya Pravda* contains an additional article "About the Horse," which says: "And whosoever buys a prince's horse, whether it be a boyar, or a merchant, or an orphan..." We find the same in the Novgorod Sophia and the Archaeographic copies of the Pushkin version.<sup>2</sup> In this brief list of the population, the term *sirota* obviously denotes the peasant.

We can discern the *smerd* also under the very broad term *lyudi*, depending on the general tenor of the document. Thus, the will of the Galich Prince, Vladimir Vasilovich, drawn up in 1287, says: "I gave her (my wife—*Author*) my manor of Gorodel and the right to collect therein road and haulage tolls; as for my *lyudi*, they shall continue to work for my princess after my death as they had worked for me (another variant: as they had carried out their obligations and paid dues). When the prince has need to build a city they shall work on it, and the taxes and the Tatar tribute they shall pay to the prince."<sup>3</sup> The additional directive indicates that the people mentioned in the will are not slaves but serf *smerds*, or *sirotas*. They work for the lord, or pay him quitrent and dues simultaneously.

It is unlikely that we shall be mistaken if we add to this the first account of the *Laurenty Annals* for 947, to the effect that Princess Olga set up "*pogosts* and tributes," "quitrent and tributes" along the Msta and the Luga. Obviously, the *smerds* inhabited the *pogosts* even then, and

<sup>1</sup> Е. Петухов, Серапион Владимирский, русский проповедник XIII века, СПб 1888. (Y. Petukhov, *Serapion of Vladimir, Russian Preacher of the 13th Century*, St. Petersburg, 1888.)

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, The U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Institute of History, Vol. 1, pp. 159, 289, 311.

<sup>3</sup> *Collection of State Deeds and Treaties*, Vol. II, Nos. 4-5; *Ipaty Annals*, p. 595.

Princess Olga, mindful of her husband's bitter experience, thought fit to regulate the collection of tributes and rents. The "reform" was primarily designed to improve the system of exploiting the *smerds*, and, of course, others. It would be no overstatement to suggest that she was simultaneously engaged in organizing the princely demesne.

Although we have sufficient evidence in our sources to distinguish two categories of *smerds*, one being *smerds* who are directly dependent on their feudal lords, I must admit that we lack data regarding the nature of this dependence.

Large landholdings with dependent peasants are characteristic of feudal society. But the nature of this dependence is extremely varied.

We have analysed the forms of dependence of the *ryadovich* (*zakup*). We know very much less about the *smerd's* dependence; furthermore, the evidence contained in the source-material can be interpreted very differently.

Bearing in mind that the *chelyad* included slaves, it is highly probable that the feudal lord who had the serf at his disposal was little inclined to distinguish between his treatment of the slave and the serf, viewing both as his people. At all events the existence of the peasant community, that bulwark of peasant independence, must have had a definite effect on the mass of free *smerds* by slowing down the rate of feudalization on the one hand, and on the other, by moderating the forms of peasant dependence.

Unfortunately, we can say nothing of the early stages of this process in Eastern Europe. We know that the free *smerd* who fell into the hands of the feudal lord as a result of extra-economic and economic coercion, resisted the advent of feudalism through collective uprisings which have not found their due place in the chronicles for obvious reasons. He also resisted it individually, by running away. We have heard of the flight of *smerds*. We have reports of runaway *smerds* in the *Novgorod Annals* early in the 13th century and the steps taken by the Novgorod authorities



to prevent the flight of *smerds*, *kholops*, debtors, etc. There is no reason to suppose that these measures were invented only then and we must infer that they are implied in the earliest treaties between Novgorod and the princes. We should, nevertheless, remember that this is only indirect evidence.

Nor is the analogy with the dependent 13th-century Polish peasant whom his lord not only recaptured, but also punished heavily, direct evidence.<sup>1</sup> The earliest *Pravda*, like the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* and the *Extensive Pravda*, refers only to the flight of the *chelyad*, possibly including the *smerd*. Vladimir Monomakh's *Statutes* in the *Extensive Pravda* mention the flight of the *zakup*, but none of the *Pravdas* makes direct mention of the fugitive *smerd*. Superficially, this may lead us to conclude that he was entirely independent, but such a conclusion would be at variance with knowledge gained from our other sources. It will be recalled that the *Extensive Pravda* contains an article entitled: "And there is no wergild in the *kholop* and the slave woman..." (Fourth Troitsk Copy, Art. 89), which says that nor is the dependent *smerd* subject to wergild. There is no mention of this in the *Pravda*. But this is indeed the case, for no wergild is imposed for the murder of the *smerd*, the *ryadovich*, the nurse, either male or female, the *selsky* and *ratai starostas*, i.e., the entire working population of the prince's bailey as described in the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*. Their death is viewed as a destruction of wealth, which in this case belongs to the prince, and which is reimbursed accordingly. That is the way Arts. 24-27 of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* are interpreted by Vladimirsky-Budanov, with whom I cannot but agree. Art. 66 of the *Extensive Pravda* stipulates that

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<sup>1</sup> Potestates conferimus abbati homines suos ascripticios a se fugientes, ubieunque locorum eos deprehenderit, capiendi, incarcerationi et in servitium perpetuum redigendi. *Codex diplomaticus Majores Poloniae*. See R. Hube, *Prawo Polskie w XIII w.*, Warszawa 1874, p. 43. Ibid., other particulars for an earlier date.

the *kholop* cannot serve as witness, while the *zakup* can do so only in special cases. And what about the dependent *smerd*? Again we find no answer. And if this reticence is too frequent, we have to draw our own conclusions. Why is it that the *Pskov Court Deed* makes no mention of either the *smerd* or the *kholop*, although their existence at the time is beyond question? The reticence of the *Russkaya Pravda* may be regarded as a puzzle which excludes at least one solution, namely, that there existed only independent *smerds*, rather, that there were no dependent *smerds* in the 11th and 12th centuries, and possibly much earlier.

Conclusions based on silence are very dangerous and often result in errors. A striking example is the assumption that there were neither *kholops* nor *smerds* in Pskov just because the *Pskov Court Deed* does not refer to them, or that the *izorniks* were the basic population of the Pskov country-side. We must be very cautious in our treatment of the *Russkaya Pravda*, which is laconic and does not necessarily deal with every aspect of the social phenomena it mentions.

The *Russkaya Pravda*'s reticence on fugitive *smerds* mentioned in other sources may possibly be explained by the fact that the number of serf *smerds* was comparatively small in the 11th and 12th centuries, and that their dependence was very varied in character. But there is no doubt that one of these forms of dependence corresponded to West-European serfdom. Finally, there is an article in the *Russkaya Pravda* which, I believe, deals with the flight of any dependent person with the exception of the *kholop*. It is Art. 120 of the Fourth Troitsk Copy. The preceding article refers to the fugitive *kholop*. "If a fugitive *kholop* acquires goods, his lord shall have the *kholop*, and the debt, and the goods also..." The next article, 120, starts with a red cinnabar letter which emphasizes the beginning of a new and distinct thought: "If one in flight takes something from the neighbours or some goods, his lord shall pay an *urok* to cover what he took." I wish to stress the



turn of the phrase throughout the section of *Pravda* entitled *On the Kholops*.

112. If a *kholop* runs away...

113. If someone catches a fugitive *kholop*...

114. If someone catches his own *kholop*...

115. If someone meets another's *kholop*, not knowing that...

116. If a *kholop* obtains *kunas* fraudulently...

117. If someone sends a *kholop* to trade...

118. If someone buys a *kholop* of another...

119. If a fugitive *kholop* acquires goods...

120. If someone in flight...

121. If the *kholop* steals from someone...

The "someone" is mentioned six times and every time it does not imply the *kholop*, who is mentioned four times. The "someone" in Art. 120 is apparently not a *kholop*. But it seems that he has a master. It may be that the dependent *smerd* is concealed behind this "someone."<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that the *Pravda* describes three cases of the loss of *kholops*: abduction, flight after assault on a freeman, i.e., escape from punishment, and flight from his master. It appears that the *zakup* was not usually abducted, but he was probably just as capable of fleeing from justice, although the law says nothing on this score. The law deals with the flight of a *zakup* from his lord. The landlords were wont to entice *zakups* and *smerds* into their possessions. If the *smerd* was taken prisoner he was divorced from all the conditions of production and was turned into a commodity and equated with the slave. The *smerd*, of course, could run away and actually did so, but the *Pravdas* do not state this outright.

The existence of dependent *smerds* in Kiev Rus is thus beyond question. The appearance of dependent *smerds* and the growth of the feudal lords' power over the free

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<sup>1</sup> An abbreviated version of the *Pravda* has Arts. 120 and 121 as a unit in which the author gives his own interpretation of the texts.

rural population is an inevitable process in any country with a feudal system.

Some, however, deny the existence of dependent *smerds* in Kiev Rus. They include Syromyatnikov ("The *Smerd* in Kiev Rus")<sup>1</sup> and Pokrovsky (see his review of the first edition of my *Peasants in Rus*).

Syromyatnikov views Kiev Rus as a slave-holding society. He believes that it was the slave, not the *smerd*, who was the main producer. He interprets the *Russkaya Pravda* in this light. He does not substantiate it and is scarcely able to do so.

Pokrovsky admits that Kiev Rus was a feudal country, but considers only the *zakups* to be in a feudal state of bondage. He believes the *smerd* peasants to be free.

The state of the sources deprives us of the possibility of fully investigating the legal status of the dependent *smerd*. But they are sufficient to disprove the outdated view that the *smerd* was an independent peasant as late as the 16th and even the 17th centuries.

The sources are very explicit on the firm bondage of the *smerd* who has fallen into the hands of the feudal lord. The *Russkaya Pravda* refers to the institution of the dead hand. This alone is sufficient to explain the nature of that bondage.

From the earliest times Rus was advancing in a direction similar to that taken by all the peoples of mediaeval Europe.

### *Smerds. (Conclusion)*

The preceding essay dealt with many aspects of the economic and legal status of two categories of *smerds*, including the *smerd's* status in production.

This is a highly important subject. Some scholars have attempted to present it differently. I therefore consider

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<sup>1</sup> *Uchoniye Zapiski Moskovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta. Trudy Yuridicheskogo Fakulteta*, Book 2, Issue 116, 1946.



it necessary to discuss it once again in concluding the chapters on the *smerds*.

Those who believe Kiev Rus to be a slave-holding country, passing through the slave-holding stage at the time in question, must necessarily assume the labour of slaves to be the basis of its production.

Those, on the other hand, who believe Rus to be one of the mediaeval states which emerged in the struggle against the slave-holding world and created a new and more progressive social order on the ruins of the slave system, realize that the slave could not have been its main productive force.

It was the free member of the community, whose status so appealed to the rank-and-file Roman and Greek, who constituted the basis of production among the Germans and the Slavs in the pre-feudal period. The advent of feudalism brought the free member of the community to serfdom, not slavery. The feudal lord "prefers to deal with the serf, who has his own husbandry, implements of production and a certain interest in work..."<sup>1</sup> Serfdom, the system of social relations characteristic of the whole of mediaeval Europe, appeared in Rus at an early date. It was already in existence as early as the 9th century. It developed rapidly, but free peasants who were under the authority of the state for a long time continued to live side by side with the serf *smerd*.

The free and the serf *smerds* are the main productive force in Kiev Rus. We should not be confused by the existence of slavery, for it is an attendant feature of feudal social relations tending to decline and eventually to disappear.

One glance at the sources is enough to show this. The *smerds* are the main payers of tribute and rent. There is no other interpretation of the following texts in our chronicles: In 1169 the Novgorodites, who had invaded the

<sup>1</sup> J. V. Stalin, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, Moscow, 1952, p. 48.

Suzdal land, collected much tribute and then returned and again "took all the tribute, and more from the Suzdal *smerds*."<sup>1</sup> In 1193, the Yugra appealed to the oncoming Novgorodites in sham submission and called themselves their tributaries.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that the furs and other "valuables," which the princes and their men-at-arms collected, came from these selfsame *smerds*, who paid tribute per "*dym*" and plough mostly in squirrel, marten, sable and other valuable furs which became commodities in the hands of the prince and his retinue. And, as I have had occasion to mention, they also paid tribute in money.

The imposition of tribute, very often paid in furs, was a method of exploiting the *smerds* in the interests of the ruling class in the early feudal period of Rus history. Labour rent and rent in kind become customary during the assimilation of different types of land by the feudal lords, when the free *smerd* is turned into a dependent *smerd*, a semi-serf, or serf. The *smerd* who fell into the hands of the feudal lord had to work in the bailey itself or for it. The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* describes the *smerd* in the princely demesne side by side with the *kholop* and the *ryadovich*. Unfortunately, it does not give us any inkling of just how the *smerd* was exploited (the *zakup* unquestionably performed corvée). We can only assume that the *smerd* was coerced into doing similar work. But that was of course not always the case. Later, in the 13th and 14th centuries, the *smerds*, becoming bondmen, gave their lord the fruits of their labour.

Both labour rent and rent in kind usually exist side by side in a definite proportion in different feudal periods.

The augmentation of rent in kind at the expense of a primitive kind of corvée signified the transition to a higher stage of feudal relations.

<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 149; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167 and p. 232.



There is no lack of information about the attempts of the rich to subjugate the free *smerds* as the chief source of their wealth. There is also abundant data on the exploitation and pauperization of the *smerds* explaining why they had to descend the social scale and seek aid from the wealthy landowners. Vladimir Monomakh, as we have seen, ascribes to himself the service of having "prevented the strong from harming the poor *smerd* and the lowly widow." Bishop Serapion's sermon reveals what it was they had to be protected from: "The powerful are not only insatiable in their quest for wealth, but also enslave and sell the free *sirotas*" (i.e., the *smerds*—*Author*).<sup>1</sup> It will be recalled that in his message to Presbyter Foma, Metropolitan Kliment also refers to the insatiable rich "who crave glory and wealth and add house to house, and manor to manor, *izgois* and *syabrs*, beehives and meadows, old arable land and lately overgrown." The *syabrs* are free peasants, independent *smerds*. Bishop Simeon of Tver, who died in 1289, says in one of his sermons: "But I tell ye, kings and princes and vice-gerents: console those who grieve, deliver the poor from the power of the rich: for they are persecuted by the rich and flee to you as their good defenders; but ye kings and princes and vice-gerents are like unto a rain cloud that empties itself over the sea and not over the land in a time of drought; you give and help those who have much gold and silver and not those who have not a single kopek: ye enslave the poor and give to the rich." The chronicler

<sup>1</sup> "And there is nothing stable among men; but everything is done in cunning: this one was deprived of his land by someone, another seized his estate, and although I heard that that manor belonged to someone, today there stands another's house. Still others, not satisfied with their estates, enslave free *sirotas* and sell them, yet others steal and pillage and also wish to amass estates... wealth was given us by God to donate to the poor and the lowly, but we harm the *sirotas* and abuse the widows and pilfer the poor." (Serapion, Bishop of Vladimir, *A Sermon on the Turmoil of This Life. Pravoslavny Sobesednik*, Book 2, Kazan, 1858, pp. 481-83.) Petukhov considers this to have been written in the pre-Mongol period and refuses to acknowledge Serapion as its author. (Y. Petukhov, op. cit., p. 12.)

comments on the behaviour of this bishop in the following words: "He was ashamed neither of the prince nor of the nobles, and argued with them . . . but he defended the poor and the *sirotas*."

It is not slaves that these powerful, energetic and insatiable people seek. Their attention is centred on the manors inhabited by the *smerds*. They are concerned with the land of the *smerds* and the *smerds* themselves, who grew up on that land, are associated with the soil and are, as a rule, inseparable from it. It is the ambition and aim of every feudal lord to seize this productive force and make it work for his benefit. This ambition was fully realized in Europe and elsewhere. The authorities of the feudal state were also naturally concerned with its success. The sources quoted above reveal how various categories of owners appropriated the land together with the *smerds* living on it.

Under the circumstances, the existence of two types of *smerds*—those who were free and those who had fallen into the hands of the feudal lords—is not only common, but inevitable. At different periods there were more free peasants in some feudal countries, in others there were fewer, but both types of peasant were to be found in each. The fate of the peasantry was basically alike throughout mediaeval Europe.

Here, then, are my main observations on the *smerds*:

1. They constitute the bulk of the Russian people from which the other classes of Russian society emerged in the course of history.

2. With the appearance of the ruling classes the *smerds* found themselves at the bottom of the social scale.

3. The sources dating to the "Kiev period" show them to have been organized in communities.

4. With the victory of feudal relations, great changes occurred in the life of the *smerds*, the most important being that they were split into two groups: a) those who



were members of communities, and b) those who became the bondmen of individuals.

5. The process of stratification within the community forced a part of the *smerds* to leave it and seek employment elsewhere. This gave the landowners new labour power.

6. The *smerds* who were independent of the landowners, continued to exist in spite of the systematic campaign waged by the privileged feudal landowners against the community.

7. The independent *smerds* were subjugated by the feudal lords who were assisted by the feudal state.

8. The legal status of the dependent *smerds* cannot be defined. There is good reason to presume that they were largely deprived of their rights.

9. The manner in which they were exploited depended on their way of life: those who lived on the lord's estate performed corvée work and were a part of the *chelyad*, and those who lived away from the estate paid rent in kind.

10. Between the 12th and 14th centuries, rent in kind becomes ever more widespread due to the extension of the feudals' landholdings, the growing numbers of their subjects and the transformation of the demesne into the seigniorry.

### Remarks on the Term *Smerd*<sup>1</sup>

From the very start the historian should decide where he is to look for traces of the peasantry's past life, the terms used by the sources to denote the ploughman working with his own stock on a small holding, and the terms used to describe the various strata of the people who fed a vast country by their labour. The scholar's conclusions depend on his interpretation of these terms.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from B.D. Grekov's *Peasants in Rus from the Earliest Times to the 17th Century*.

It is patent that everything changes, including words. If we could only fathom the life of words, history would be revealed to us in all its complexity. Unfortunately, we are as yet unable to do this. Some successful attempts have been made, but they do not, on the whole, satisfy the historian.

Our sources use many terms to denote the rural population: *smerd*, *sirota*, *syabr*, peasant, *izornik*, *miryanin*, *izgoi*, *zakup*, *ryadovich*, *selyanin*, *kmet*, *bobyl*, *polovnik*, *votchich*, *chelovek* (plural *lyudi*). The terms vary according to place, time and social aspect. It is no easy task to find one's way in this motley maze.

*Smerd* is one of the earliest terms used to denote the peasant ploughman.

It has a long and revealing history, and the philologists have had good reason to examine it.

Shafarik, the famous Slavist, said: "The Ancient Rus *smerd* (*smerdi*, *rusticus*), *mordanitsa* (*servitus*), should be compared with the name of the people known as mordva, mordvin (both are derived from the Persian *merd*, meaning man.)"<sup>1</sup> We discover similar comparisons in Shakhmatov's papers (Mordovian *mirde*—man, Votyak *murt*—man, Avestyan *mereta*, Neo Persian *mard*—man).<sup>2</sup>

This term acquired its class meaning much later.

Its use is surprisingly widespread: the Iranian *mard*, Tajik *mard*, Komi *mort*, *murt*, Udmurt *murt* (hence *ud+murt*, *mord+va*). Everywhere its basic meaning is man, people. It is used figuratively to denote people of a lower social rung, like the Russian "man" is used in a general and a particular sense (man—servant, Ukrainian *cholovik*—husband). Obviously, the second meaning could only have appeared much later when people were divided into upper and lower classes.

<sup>1</sup> П. И. Шафарик, Славянские древности, т. I, кн. I, М. 1837, стр. 93. (P. I. Shafarik, *Slavonic Antiquities*, Vol. I, Book I, Moscow, 1837, p. 93.)

<sup>2</sup> А. А. Шахматов, Введение в курс истории русского языка, П. 1916, стр. 35. (A. A. Shakhmatov, *Introduction to the History of the Russian Language*, Petrograd, 1916, p. 35.)



There is an analogy for such an evolution in the semantics of the Egyptian word *rome*, which initially meant man in general, and later came to mean a servant, dependent, slave, i.e., a person who was inferior socially.<sup>1</sup>

There can scarcely be a more convincing approach to the solution of this complex and interesting problem, bearing in mind the present state of linguistics.

It is true that Miklošič, the prominent Slavist of the last century, allows two possible solutions of the problem, namely—from *smorod*, and the Persian *mord*, preferring the former.<sup>2</sup> Today, we can scarcely agree with him.

The Slavs, among them the Russian people, are a product of an intricate ethnogenic process. The great antiquity of various tribes and peoples, together with the survivals of numerous ethnic intermixtures, are mirrored in the Russian term *smerd*.

This word alone, which has been preserved over a vast territory from the Pyrenees to Iran and from the Black Sea to the Baltic, induces us to give serious thought to the relationships between European and Asian peoples.

I am not in a position to survey this term's entire history and I doubt if this can be done to any great extent. I make only a few suggestions on its history in Russia.

Initially, it denoted a human in general, but as the richer and nobler groups were separated from the mass, i.e., as classes took shape, new words were needed to designate them. The word *bolyarin*, or *boyarin* was used to denote the landowner; *knyazh muzh* and *boyarin*—the man-at-arms, and *gost*—the merchant. The mass which remained below continued to bear the name of *smerd*,

<sup>1</sup> For this information I wish to thank Academician Struve.

<sup>2</sup> Kr. Ks. Miklošič, *Etimologisches Wörterbuch*, 1886, p. 310. The term *smerd* is believed to be a derivative of the word *smerdeti* not only by some Russian scholars. I. Peiskens (*Zur sozialgeschichte Rochmens*, Weimar, 1896-97) also believed *smerd* to be a Slavonic word derived from the word *smerdeti*.

which began to assume a different meaning in class society. It began to be associated not with the ancient *smerd*, *merd*, *mard*, meaning man, but with the verb *smerdeti*,<sup>1</sup> and this lent the term its pejorative and even offensive meaning. In the Polish Koshub language, we learn from Solovyov, *smird* denotes a poor villager,<sup>2</sup> and in old Latvia it meant peasant.

Analogies of scornful names used by other peoples to denote the lower orders forced to toil for their masters and the notables are highly characteristic. *Homines lauti* or *mundi* are the tidy, clean and rich, *homines grassi*, *popolo grasso* are the fat, the rich, in contrast to the *homines sordidi*, *sales*, *noir*, who are born in dirt, the poor, *homines tenuiores*—the lean, the needy and the poor.<sup>3</sup>

There is a certain analogy between the evolution in the semantics of *smerd* with that of peasant (*крестьянин*).

Initially, the peasant was a Christian, i.e., a person professing the faith of Christ. The word had no other meaning before the arrival of the Tatars. But when their rule established a class of conquerors above the mass of the Christian Russian population, the term *khristianin* (*христианин*) came to denote the bulk of the Russian population.

Maciejowski quotes Karamzin as saying that it was the Tatars who called the Russian people Christians (*крестьяне*).<sup>4</sup> But the Russian people themselves also clung to this term to emphasize their distinction from the Tatars.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Smerdeti*—to stink.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 230, Note 1.

<sup>3</sup> М. М. Покровский, Соображения по поводу изменения смысла слов („Известия Академии наук СССР“, № 4, 1936, стр. 90). (M. M. Pokrovsky, *The Change in the Meaning of Words*. *Izvestia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, No. 4, 1936, p. 90.)

<sup>4</sup> Wacław Alexander Maciejowski, *Historja prawodawstw słowian-skich*, Vol. III, 1835, p. 179. (*Крестьяне*—a derivative of *крест*—the cross.—Tr.)

<sup>5</sup> П. Я. Черных, О связи развития языка с историей народа („Известия Академии наук СССР“, отделение литературы и языка № 3,



The term *muzh* underwent an almost similar evolution. The early *Russkaya Pravda* uses it to denote a freeman ("if a *muzh* kills a *muzh*..."). In Russo-Lithuanian usage *muzhik* denoted a peasant: "A *muzhik* remains an *otchich* as long as he is good," "a *muzhik* cannot purchase land from another *muzhik* for all times," "a common *muzhik* is not allowed to sell a lord's land outright."

The *Lithuanian Statute* speaks of the "*muzhik* who pays taxes."<sup>1</sup> Colloquially, *muzhik* is used to denote husband, man, but has very frequently a pejorative connotation, meaning an uncultured and uncouth person.

The term *kmet* (кмет or кмет) has a somewhat similar history. This Slavonic word used to denote a freeman. Later on, it came to denote in some Slavonic languages those who stood above the mass of the people ("and about a hundred *kmet* heads fell," says the Synodal Copy of the *First Novgorod Annals*, while the Academic Copy uses "nobles" instead of *kmets*).

Among the Poles, this word began to be used at an early date to denote a rustic, a peasant, both free and dependent. The Bogarodzica song, one of the earliest memorials of Polish literature, says: "Adamie, ty bozy kmieciu, ty siedzisz u Boga w wiecu."<sup>2</sup> God's *kmet* in this case is God's servant or, as the ancient Rus scholar would have put it—God's slave.

The *Polskaya Pravda* (*Księga Praw*) does not apparently use the term because it was written by the Germans (it has come down to us in German). The word *kmet*, meaning peasant, is often used and frequently substituted by *smerd* in the *Vislitsa Statute*, in that version of it which was adapted for use in Galich Rus. Świętochowski considers its origin obscure to this day. He allows that

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1951, стр. 244). (P. Y. Chernykh, *The Development of Language and the History of the People. Izvestia Akademii Nauk SSSR, otd. literatury i yazyka* No. 3, 1951, p. 244.)

<sup>1</sup> *Lithuanian Statute*, 1529, Section XI, Arts. 1-4.

<sup>2</sup> B. Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego*.

it may not be Polish in origin at all, although it is definitely Slavonic, since it is used among the Czechs, the Serbs, the Bosnians and the Montenegrins. In the 13th century, *kmet* denoted *chłopa*,<sup>1</sup> a peasant who paid quitrent. Kavchinsky thinks that *kmet* initially meant a sedentary person, a full-fledged inhabitant and a participant of *veche* meetings and court sessions. Maletski considers him to be a payer of quitrent (*czynszownik*). Hube says that *kmet* was first used in 1241 to denote freemen as well as bondmen.<sup>2</sup> "The change which took place in the meaning of the word has also remained unexplained. Originally it denoted (and still does among some Slav peoples) sedate persons, elders, dignitaries, and later, particularly in Poland, it began to mean "*poddany*," "subject people." It developed in reverse order to the term *dedich* which initially denoted a subject (*poddany*), and later on a lord and landowner (*pan*)."<sup>3</sup> The latest Polish paper on the subject, which holds that *kmet* is Slavonic, is by Jan Otębski.<sup>4</sup>

In a special study, Lavrovsky concluded that *kmet* is a very widely used term known among all the Slavs. It has its own history and different meanings depending on place and time.<sup>5</sup>

It should be remembered that there are other terms like *smerd* which are equipollent, namely, *sirota*, *selyanin*, *miryanin*, etc. In Rus, the term *krestyanin* gradually replaced other similar terms. It gained full recognition officially in the Russian state in the 15th century, but colloquially the old *smerd* and *sirota* remained in use for a long time.

<sup>1</sup> A. Świętochowski, *Historja chłopów*, str. 110, Note 1.

<sup>2</sup> R. Hube, *Prawo polskie w 13 w.*, str. 52.

<sup>3</sup> A. Świętochowski, op. cit., str. 111, Note 1.

<sup>4</sup> Jan Otębski, *Opochodzeniu wyrazu kmieci*. *Slavia antiqua*, t. 1.

<sup>5</sup> П. Лавровский, Несколько слов о значении и происхождении слова „кмет“ („Москвитянин“, т. VI, 1853, стр. 79—92). (P. Lavrovsky, *A Few Words on the Meaning and Origin of "Kmet."* *Moskvityanin*, Vol. VI, 1853, pp. 79-92.)



We are faced with a similarly important and complex problem once we analyse the terms *chelovek* and *lyudi*. I do not undertake to solve it. I wish merely to point out that the word *chelovek* is found among all Slav people: *chelovek*, *chlek*; Pol. *człowiek*, *człek*; Czech—*člověk*; Slovene—*človek*; Sorabian—*čžlowek*, *čžlowk*, *zlowek*, *zlojek*, *čžłoweck*; Vind.—*zhlovek*, *zlovek*, Carn.—*zhlovek*, Dalmatian—*chyovik*, *cjovjek*; Raguzsk—*cjovjek*, Slaven—*csovik*; Bosnian—*človjek*, *clovjek*, *človik*.

The plural: *lyudi*; Czech—*lide*, *lidi*; Polish—*ludzie*; Sorabian—*luže*; Vind.—*ludje*; Carn.—*ludji*, Slaven—*ljudi*; Horvatian—*lyud*; Raguzsk—*gljůdi*; Bosnian—*gljudi*; German—*Leute*.<sup>1</sup>

We must leave it to philology to decide just how these are related to the equipollent *merd*. I merely wish to suggest that since a variety of peoples from East and West met in Eastern Europe, several terms denoting the same thing could have appeared and competed throughout this vast territory.

In Rus, which assimilated many cultures, both terms were used in approximately the same sense, possibly with shades of meaning which gradually became more pronounced. *Lyudi* became more general in meaning, while *smerd* acquired a narrower meaning. I repeat that I do not pretend to offer a solution of this vital problem. I advance it merely to call the attention of the philologists to it.

This excursion into the history of terms denoting the agricultural population merely serves as a reminder that the scholar who sets himself the task of studying the history of that population cannot ignore the facts of language which bear traces of an antiquity which no written source can match.

<sup>1</sup> B. Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego*.

## Izgois

Until now we have been dealing with a number of groups of the rural population with the aim of deciphering the general concept of *chelyad*.

According to the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, it included the *ryadovich*, the *smerd* and the *kholop*.

But the earliest *Pravda* in one of its later addenda to Art. 1, also lists the *izgoi* among the various groups making up the Novgorod population.

We also find the *izgois* in other sources. This is a subject which merits the most serious attention, particularly from a scholar who has set himself the task of surveying the history of Rus's rural population.

As we shall presently learn, the institution of the *izgoi* in Kiev Rus is further proof that slave labour was not the basis of production in Kiev Rus, and that slavery was withering away in the face of the growth of serfdom.

I shall no doubt be right if I say that the word *izgoi* reminds the modern reader of the well-known text which tells of the illiterate priest's son, the bankrupt merchant, the *kholop* who had ransomed himself, and, finally, even the orphaned prince.<sup>1</sup> The commonplace nature of these phenomena undoubtedly bears witness to the popularity of the text, but even after we have quoted it the problem remains unsolved, because it is much more complex than it appears at first sight.

Art. 1 of the earliest *Russkaya Pravda* mentions the *izgoi* among the social groups which have the right of the 40-*grivna* wergild. ("And if it be a *rusin*, a *gridin*, or a merchant, or a prince's steward, or a *mechnik*, if it be an *izgoi*, or a *slovenin*, there shall be 40 *grivnas* for him.") Our scholars usually ignore the fact that the sources speak of different kinds of *izgois*, the urban and the rural. They also pay scant attention to the evolution of the *izgoi* in

<sup>1</sup> The Statutes of Grand Prince Vsevolod. (Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Reader on the History of Russian Law*, Issue 1, p. 245.)



the period to which our sources relate. But it is obvious that there is a palpable difference between the *izgoi* who has the right of the 40-*grivna* wergild (and the earliest *Pravda* knows no other) and those whom Prince Rostislav handed over to the Smolensk Bishop together with the Drosenkoye manor in 1150, or those again whom, according to Metropolitan Kliment, the insatiable rich catch in their net, or those whom Vsevolod's *Church Statutes* of the early 12th century list among the people who live in the church almonry.

The interesting idea that "the *izgoi* ... system dates back to ... the tribal system," was advanced by Kalachov and partially supported by Mrochek-Drozdovsky.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the fact that, in my opinion, Mrochek-Drozdovsky does not give an entirely happy solution to the problem, I believe that he makes some highly interesting and quite acceptable observations. "As a historical phenomenon," he says, "the *izgoi* system existed and developed under definite conditions and the status of the *izgoi* in ancient society evolved in step with the changing conditions." "In order to determine the status of the *izgoi* in society," he goes on, "we have to know the conditions and structure of society itself. This is imperative because at various stages of the development people live in different social communities whose system corresponds to the given period of their existence. The primitive form of community is the tribe...; subsequently, owing to various causes, tribal barriers disappear and the tribe is ... replaced by the land community ... based on common land tenure." But the author does not make full use of these observations in approaching the problem as a whole. As a result of his investigations he arrives at Solovyov's definition of the *izgoi* ("The *izgoi* was in general one who for some reason

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<sup>1</sup> P. N. Mrochek-Drozdovsky, *Studies of "Russkaya Pravda"* Addenda to Issue 2, pp. 44, 47. But the following phrase is also to be found in that paper: "The tribal system glanced off the *izgoi* as a ray off a mirror." (P.48.)

could not remain in his former state and had not as yet identified himself with some other"), although he regards it as inadequate, because it does "not take into account either the *milieu* which had evicted the *izgoi* or the rights of the latter, which differed in each new social state,<sup>1</sup> although he himself says that this is the only fruitful line of investigation.

Mrochek-Drozdovsky has a number of other interesting ideas. He says that "a voluntary exit from tribal communities is possible only when there is a hope of finding some refuge outside the tribe, even if only of the kind that was found by the bird set free by Noah from the Ark. . . . This hope indicates the beginning of the decay of the restricted tribal ties, the beginning of the end of the tribal system . . .; the very desire of the member of the tribe to leave it is the beginning of its end."

Our sources say nothing about the *izgois* in connection with the disintegration of tribal relationships, for there were still no written sources in that early period of our history. Mrochek-Drozdovsky's assumptions are not based on documented facts, but only on speculations. Nevertheless, we cannot discard them as entirely improbable.

If we limit ourselves to the facts we shall, first of all, have to focus our attention on a philological fact. The word *izgoi* consists of a prefix and root which even today means "to live" in Great Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian. The *izgoi* is one who has been expelled from his usual habitation or has left it.

But this definition of the *izgoi* is much too general to satisfy us. The term existed parallel to the *izgoi* himself and acquired a different meaning. Eventually, it lost its initial meaning. Lange and Dyakonov appeared to be very near to a solution when they advanced the bold idea that the *izgoi*, whose name is derived from the word "*goiti*"—to live, came to mean a person who was deprived of "life," means of subsistence, i.e., a destitute person, since "to

<sup>1</sup> P. N. Mrochek-Drozdovsky, op. cit., p. 75.



live" in antiquity meant to have the means of subsistence. In 1150, for example, Prince Izyaslav tells his men-at-arms: "You have followed me out of the Rus land, and were deprived of your manors and lives."<sup>1</sup> Hence the *izgoi's* need to seek refuge among the landowners, who are capable of furnishing him with these means of subsistence—naturally, on certain conditions.

The view of Lange and Dyakonov is partially shared by Sergeevich who considers the *izgois* to be "people in distress," and observes that "there can be many varieties of such people." Further on, Sergeevich is prepared "to apply this term to people of the lower order in general."<sup>2</sup> But it should be noted that these three scholars<sup>3</sup> speak of village *izgois* only.

If the term *izgoi* really appeared in tribal society, it may well be that foreign elements were accepted into the restricted tribal groups, but this process was intensified with the disintegration of the tribal communities and was undoubtedly reflected in the *Russkaya Pravda* at a time when only scattered survivals of the tribe remained. It appears, therefore, that the *izgoi* is mentioned in the *Russkaya Pravda* as a survival of the long-destroyed tribal system. He appears to be a full-fledged member of the new, apparently urban community and is in some aspects equal in status to the man-at-arms and the merchant. There is nothing improbable in the assumption that this equality is of a similar origin and just as relative as the *zakup's* right to complain against his master when the latter assaulted him "without reason." In short, it may well be a compromise measure to pacify the public movement in Novgorod in 1015, and the addendum to Art. 1 of the early text of the *Russkaya Pravda* may well have been

<sup>1</sup> Н. И. Ланге, Исследование об уголовном праве Русской Правды, стр. 59, 60, 69, 70. (N.I. Lange, *Studies in "Russkaya Pravda's" Criminal Law*, pp. 59, 60, 69, 70.)

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Sergeevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. I, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> See also M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, pp. 122, 123.

made after it and largely as a result of it. If this be so, it is quite possible that as early as the beginning of the 11th century the *izgois* may have lost their equality. But it was not entirely forgotten and in the 1015 events was possibly an unwritten slogan among the lower social orders, mainly in the towns.

But we discover the *izgois* not only in the towns. We find them much more frequently in the villages. There is nothing improbable in the assumption that the urban *izgois* differed in status from the rural *izgois*. The former were free, and it is to them that Art. 1 of the early *Pravda* refers.

If it is safe possible to assume that the *izgois* appeared during the disintegration of the tribal system, they would obviously have continued to exist later. One who left his community and was accepted into another, possibly with some limitation on his rights, could have remained there under the name and with the status of an *izgoi*.

An analogy to this obscure phenomenon in the history of Ancient Rus may, I believe, be found in the migrans of the *Salicheskaya Pravda*. Chapter 14, entitled *De migrantibus*, says: "If some one desires to settle down in the villa of another, and if one or more inhabitants of the villa agree to accept him but one of their number opposes this, he shall have not the right to settle there" (paragraph 1); "If the newly-settled one is not charged with anything within a period of 12 months, he shall remain inviolable, as the other neighbours" (paragraph 3).

This is an ancient German community which has the right to accept or reject foreigners. Having been accepted, this foreigner becomes a full-fledged member of the community. It may well be that the *izgoi* of the early period did in fact resemble this settler, but that must have been a very long time ago. By the 11th and 12th centuries the *izgoi* had nothing in common with the migrans.

Apart from blood relations (the big family which broke up into individual families) there are members of the



Politsa *veru* who have no blood ties and who settled there and were accepted very long ago.

It should be borne in mind that *Russkaya Pravda's* list which contains the *izgoi*, consisted, even at the time of its compilation, of social elements who were not equipollent socially. This is above all true of the *izgois*. The beginning of the 12th century finds them in totally different circumstances in the villages. They are people adscript to the land and the lord. We discover them among the church people, people receiving alms, and occupying the lowest stations in life after the widow, the *pushchennik* and the *zadushny* people.

We cannot but agree with Presnyakov's attempt to restore the initial text of this part of the *Statutes*.<sup>1</sup> It should then read: "And these are church people: the Father-Superior, the Mother-Superior (there follows a list of church officers), the blind, the lame, the widow, the *pushchennik*, the *zadushny* and the *izgoi*."<sup>2</sup> An insertion was made by some unknown glossarist into this initial text saying: "There are three kinds of *izgois*: the priest's son who is illiterate, the *kholop* who ransoms himself and the bankrupt merchant." This list, as Presnyakov correctly notes, was extended by a "lyrical" exclamation of a prince who added: "And here is the fourth kind of *izgoi*: if a prince is orphaned." This exclamation is not so much lyrical as ironical and should not be taken seriously, since the orphaned prince could hardly fall among people who received alms and were under the jurisdiction of the Church.

But the fact that the *izgois* are classed together with ecclesiastics does not reveal the economic nature of the *izgoi* since church people, as we have just seen, included also the Father and Mother Superior, who headed the cloisters and mostly belonged to the upper classes.

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> The term *izgoi* (*узбоіекоіа*) is contained in one of the versions of the *Statutes*.

The *Church Statutes* list the people who are under the Church jurisdiction, and the *izgois* are, in fact, among them. But the presence of the *izgois* among these does not make them exclusively ecclesiastic. We much more frequently find *izgois* in the princely estate. Prince Rostislav Mstislavich gives the Smolensk Bishopric "Drosenskoye manor with the *izgois* and the land ... and Yasenskoye manor with the bee-keeper and the land and the *izgois*."<sup>1</sup> In a message to Presbyter Foma Metropolitan Kliment speaks of the insatiable rich who "add house to house, and manor to manor, *izgois*, and *syabrs*, and beehives, meadows, old arable and lately overgrown land."<sup>2</sup> The *izgois* who lived in some parts of Novgorod and were obliged to pave its streets together with other citizens could scarcely be regarded as people under the jurisdiction of the Church. The *Pskov Annals* for 1341 mention a princely manor called Izgoi. Finally, there is mention of the *izgois* in the sermon literature which gives absolutely no grounds for classing them as people under Church jurisdiction exclusively, but rather leads us to presume that the appeal of the Church was directed at the laity.

A list of sins, in ascending scale, is given in an *Admonition* of the confessor to the repenting sinner. These include unrighteous enrichment including *rezoimstvo*, which occupies first place. This sin is regarded as more grievous than theft. But even this is surpassed by the imposition of *izgoistvo*: "And we repeat: "Those who exact *izgoistvo* from those who ransom themselves from work: they shall have no grace, for they showed no mercy to people, who like themselves were created by God, and were not satisfied with the set price."<sup>3</sup> In relation to the "set price" the

<sup>1</sup> *Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. I, No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Н. Никольский, О литературных трудах Климента Смолятича, писателя XII века, СПб 1892, стр. 104. (N. Nikolsky, *The Literary Works of Metropolitan Kliment Smolyatich, a Writer of the 12th Century*, St. Petersburg, 1892, p. 104.)

<sup>3</sup> *Russian Historical Library*, Vol. VI, p. 842; С. И. Смирнов, Материалы для истории древнерусской покаянной дисциплины. Чтения



*izgoistvo* is the same thing as interest is to a borrowed sum of money. It is permissible to accept a slave's ransom price but it is a great sin to take more than that price (it is this that is called the *izgoistvo*). The same *Admonition* contains yet another important detail. The Church also opposes those who take *izgoistvo* from the children of *kholops* born after their parents had ransomed themselves. Presnyakov rightly believes this to be a survival in a period when the freedman continued in some measure to remain in the power of his lord.<sup>1</sup>

Church sermons stress that the *izgois* emerged from the ranks of the *kholops* and thus prove that "the *kholop* ransoms himself from *kholopage*," a fact mentioned in Prince Vsevolod's *Statutes*. If the Church speaks mostly of *izgois* of this origin we shall not be far out in inferring that the bulk of them are people who emerged from *kholopage*. They are, therefore, mainly freedmen, former slaves, serfs settled on the lord's land.

This fact aptly illustrates the disappearance of slavery. It is not surprising that it was in the Church that freedmen from among the *izgois* found many vacancies, since the Church was the first of the landowners to reject slave labour and go over to more progressive forms of exploitation. However, the other categories of landowners did not lag far behind.

Yushkov's penetrating remark on the value of the section of Prince Vsevolod's *Statutes* dealing with the *izgoi* merits undoubted attention. He says: "In the 12th century everyone knew perfectly well what the *izgoi* was, and that is why the *Statutes* do not explain who they are, but merely list them among the church people who, according to the *Statutes*, were under the patronage of the Church."

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ОИДР, кн. III, 1912, отд. II, стр. 50. (S. I. Smirnov, *Materials for a History of the Procedure of Repentance in Ancient Rus*. Lectures on the Russian History and Antiquities Society at Moscow University, Book III, 1912, Section II, p. 50. ("He who levies *kunas* on an *izgoi*."))

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., p. 275.

The author believes that the *Statutes* refer only to one category of *izgois*, namely, church *izgois*. He then mentions another category of *izgois*, the princely *izgois*, who were "under the special protection of the prince." While I unconditionally accept the former category, I feel it necessary to make a few observations on the latter. Were the bankrupt merchant or the freedman necessarily under the patronage of either the Church or the prince? Was it possible for them to be under someone else's patronage? The sources give a positive answer. Such *izgois* are mentioned, for example, by Kiev Metropolitan Kliment Smolyatich (1147-1154). He speaks of big landowners in general and not of any particular group, when he condemns those "who crave glory, and add house to house, and manor to manor, and *izgois* and *syabrs*, and beehives and meadows, old arable and lately overgrown land."<sup>1</sup>

Those who "crave glory" are not necessarily only princes and church dignitaries. The Metropolitan by no means meant himself and other church dignitaries. He noted a phenomenon very common in the society of his day.

From this it follows, I believe, that the second group of *izgois*, mentioned by Yushkov, should also include *izgois* living as serfs in secular, non-princely demesnes. One of his final phrases gives the impression that he is also inclined to go beyond the close framework he himself had laid down. "The further evolution of all categories of *izgois*," he says, "is clear. It is their gradual transformation into the labour force of the feudal estates."<sup>2</sup>

But there can be no doubt that the Church made extensive use of *izgoi* labour. Since they were among those dependent on the Church, we should be justified in applying to them the *Statutes* of Prince Yaroslav Vladimirovich on church courts, which refers to all "domestics" (i.e., people who belonged to the houses of bishops) in church

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-24.



and monastery. They are judged by the church authorities. The princely authorities do not take part in the sessions of this court, and the property of the *izgoi*, in the absence of direct heirs, goes to the bishop, as the *smerd's* goes to the prince under similar circumstances.

Everything that we know about the *izgois* suggests the following conclusions: 1) we know practically nothing of urban *izgois*; 2) the rural *izgois* live in church, princely and lordly manors; 3) the composition of the *izgois* as a social group is complex; there were apparently numerous ways of becoming one, and of these evidently the most common at the time was the transition from *kholopage* through a manumission obtained by a ransom; 4) among other factors, the wealth of a landowner was judged by the number of his *izgois*; 5) the *izgois* are adscript to owner and land, and the former is free to dispose of his land together with the *izgois* living on it; 6) the *izgois* are under the jurisdiction of their masters; 7) the masters probably get the property of the *izgois* in the absence of heirs.

It is not difficult to divine the use made of the *izgois*. They are mostly ploughmen who have to work for their masters. In other words they are a category of people held in feudal bondage, serfs.

Our very meagre and contradictory sources give us an inkling of the rather long road traversed by the *izgois* from the unknown date when they appeared to the 13th century (when the term ceases to be used).

By the 12th century, the status of the *izgoi*, at least of the rural *izgoi*, was beyond doubt largely fixed, and we find him in the demesne of a big landowner as a serf who may be handed over to another together with the land. In this new status he merged with the mass of other vassals and lost his specific name together with his specific social characteristics. I feel that it is impossible to insist that the *sirota*, the *smerd* and the *izgoi* are identical, but they are surely very much akin in status, since all three

groups in the 12th century, even if not always serfs in the narrow sense of the word as we use it, are in any event greatly dependent on the feudal landowner. We can safely class them as people who are the bondmen of individuals and who are the backbone of the large demesne.

In conclusion, I must needs say that this category of bondmen is much more difficult to study than the others in Ancient Rus. We have to limit ourselves mainly to conjectures which are substantiated to a greater or lesser degree.

### *Pushchenniks, Zadushny People and Proshchenniks*<sup>1</sup>

Our sources mention several other categories of people dependent on the Church, namely *pushchenniks*, *zadushny* people and *proshchenniks*. There are *proshchenniks* not only in the demesnes of the Church, but also in those of the princes,<sup>2</sup> and, consequently, in those of the boyars as well, since we have no reason to assume that there was any fundamental difference between princely and boyar demesnes.

A *zadushny* individual is, apparently, a *kholop* released from bondage under a will and donated to a monastery in payment for prayers to be said by the brethren "for the soul" of the deceased donor. As a result, he undoubtedly ceased to be a slave and became a serf.

*Pushchenniks*, as will easily be guessed, were those who had been released from *kholopage* and had likewise become serfs.

The correlation of *pushchenniks* and *proshchenniks* has for a long time held the attention of our scholars. The term *proshchennik* as Vladimir's *Church Statutes* have

<sup>1</sup> *Pushchennik*—one released, or let off. *Proshchennik*—one absolved, or forgiven. *Zadushny*—an adjective derived from *za dushu*—for the soul.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Rostislav's 1150 *Statutes* to the Smolensk Bishopric: "And I give hereby to the Holy Virgin and the bishop *proshchenniks* with honey and *kunas*, and *wergild* and *prodazhas*, and they shall be judged by no man." (*Dopolneniya k Aktam Istoricheskim*, Vol. I, No. 4.)



it—by no means in all versions of these *Statutes*, it is true, and probably inserted later<sup>1</sup>—corresponds to the *pushchennik* of Vsevolod's *Statutes* (1125-1136), which have also not been preserved in their original form. If we accept this interchangeability of the two terms, which are most probably equipollent, we shall have to study them together.

Since the document mentioned above considers both as people under Church jurisdiction, they may be taken as a group of individuals dependent on the Church in the sense that their sins had been absolved or forgiven. This terminology remained in church use until much later.

The Solovetsky Monastery had, even as late as the 20th century, not only people living there and working for the monastery, people who had taken the vow in the hope of recovering from an illness, but also the children of those who had recovered under similar circumstances. In olden times, this may have been a still more frequent occurrence.

As a matter of fact, that is how Gerberstein explains it: "Vladimir also subjected to the power and jurisdiction of the clergy ... those who were granted a miracle by some saint, or were released from slavery for the sake of someone's salvation."<sup>2</sup> A characteristic attribute (God's) was used with the word *proshchennik*, so that the phrase signified an individual who had been forgiven by God (*прошечники божи*).<sup>3</sup>

The whole problem is easily solved if the *pushchenniks* and *proshchenniks* are nothing more than church people. But we find *proshchenniks* in the prince's demesne. Smo-

<sup>1</sup> С. В. Юшков, Исследования по истории русского права, вып. I, стр. 103. (S. V. Yushkov, *Studies in the History of Russian Law*, Issue I, p. 103.) The author presumes that *proshchenniks* were initially not mentioned in Vladimir's *Statutes* at all.

<sup>2</sup> С. Герберштейн, Записки о московитских делах, СПб 1908, стр. 69. (S. Gerberstein, *Notes on Muscovite Affairs*, St. Petersburg, 1908, p. 69.)

<sup>3</sup> А. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I, p. 120.

lensk Prince Rostislav is recorded as transferring them to the Smolensk Bishopric. This complicates the problem.

Bakhrushin suggests that we accept Kluchevsky's interpretation of the *pushchenniks* and *proshchenniks*. He thinks they are criminals or bad debtors, who could be exempted from repayment in exchange for lifelong labour (often hereditary) on church lands.<sup>1</sup> But the fact remains unexplained why these people are considered "church people"<sup>2</sup>: one could as easily become a bad debtor of a lay lord, particularly in view of the fact that church institutions were then not so numerous. Furthermore, the *Russkaya Pravda* clearly shows how the law handled the *vdacha* and to some extent the *zakup* in such cases. The absolution of some criminal offence could be effected not only in monasteries and church institutions. But the point is that it is unlikely that the withdrawal of the suit by the plaintiff completely cleared the criminal of responsibility for his crime. Kluchevsky holds that this was not so at all.<sup>3</sup>

In my opinion, the *proshchennik* case, which Bakhrushin cites from Kluchevsky, is not wholly convincing, because in Polycarp's story of the monk Grigory there is no mention of "absolution," but rather of punishment. Once Grigory ransomed some thieves from a state judge: "The lord of the town began to torture them (thieves—*Author*), and the ransomed thieves, of their own accord, "delivered themselves to the Pechera Monastery." On another occasion, the same Grigory punished some thieves himself, without recourse to the court. "He *sentenced* (my italics. —*Author*) them to labour in the Pechera Monastery."

<sup>1</sup> С. В. Бахрушин, К вопросу о крещении Киевской Руси („Историк-марксист" № 2, 1937, стр. 66). (S. V. Bakhrushin, *The Baptism of Kiev Rus, Istorik-Marxist*, No. 2, 1937, p. 66.)

<sup>2</sup> Possibly because the *Statutes* speak only of church people without touching upon the *pushchenniks* and *proshchenniks* of the secular *demesnes*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Essays and Investigations*, Collection I, Petrograd, 1918, p. 320.



The thieves began to work for the monastery "even with their children." Kluchevsky does not consider these thieves to be *proshchenniks* either. He cites these examples to show how people who broke away from society or were threatened with banishment from it became monastery menials, and also to show the conditions of their servitude.<sup>1</sup> He is inclined to classify these "thieves" as *izgois*. He presumes that the *proshchenniks* of Prince Rostislav's deed were people "who became the prince's *kholops* for their crimes or debts, or perhaps were acquired in some other way, and *absolved* by him (Kluchevsky's italics), freed without ransom. They apparently paid quitrent in honey and money for the use of apiaria and plots on the prince's land, where they were settled before their liberation and where they remained as freemen, much like the agricultural slaves of Byzantium, who sometimes got personal freedom provided they remained on the arable land as peasants adscript to the land."<sup>2</sup>

Yushkov, in his *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus* and *The Social and Political System and Law in the Kiev State*, also commented on the *proshchenniks*.<sup>3</sup> He believes them to be individuals "who were turned into *kholops* for bad debts, but were later granted absolution and freedom." But he does not cite any evidence in support of his contention, limiting himself to criticism of the view that *proshchenniks* were people who had been granted "a miraculous cure."

I am well aware of the difficulties of a detailed deciphering of the *pushchenniks-proshchenniks* conception and since I am unable to give a convincing interpretation of the use of these terms in respect of a definite category of church and lay people, I would underscore that which in my opinion is indisputable.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 321.

<sup>3</sup> S.V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 119, and *The Social and Political System and Law in Kiev State*, p. 307.

They are people who for one reason or another had renounced their previous state (it is not definitely known what kind of state it was, for they may have been either *kholops* or freemen) and who had fallen into the hands of their feudal masters (whether ecclesiastical or secular). They are people who in their new station in life become very much akin to *izgois*. It is noteworthy that they are serfs and not slaves, which again indicates the gradual elimination of slavery and the substitution of slave labour by a more progressive type of labour, namely, serf labour.

### General Remarks

I should like to point out a few more details in the history of the period in question.

It is striking that the chronicler himself singles out several periods in the history of the Russian land. ("Whence emerged the Russian land.") He refers, albeit very incoherently and vaguely, to the tribal system of the Eastern Slavs, then to the formation of the state of Ancient Rus, and, finally, discusses its decline and fall. He has in mind not only political events, which naturally hold his attention, but also social relations.

The compiler of the *Initial Chronicle* wrote at a time when feudal relations were so mature that the early period, which to him had already become the remote past, gave rise to sympathetic and idealized reminiscences: "I beseech ye, flock of Christ, lovingly to lend me your ear full of wisdom—hear how ancient princes and their men-at-arms lived, and how they defended the Russian land, and conquered other lands; for those princes did not gather many riches nor did they tax the people with exorbitant wergild and *prodazhas*. But a just wergild they levied and, receiving it, gave it to their men-at-arms to acquire weapons. And the prince's men-at-arms got their keep fighting other lands. And when they fought they cried out: 'Brethren, let us defend our prince and the Russian land.' And they



said: 'Two hundred *grivnas*, prince, does not suffice.' For they did not adorn their women with golden bracelets, but their women wore only silver, and under them the Russian land flourished." The chronicler then turns to his own time: "God has sent the heathen on us for our greed; our flocks, and our villages and property are in their hands, yet we do not cease from our evil ways. For it is written: riches gathered by untruth are scattered; and again: he gathereth, but knoweth not for whom he gathereth them; and yet again: the just man prefers the little to the many riches of the iniquitous." From this he infers: "From this day, then, let us, my beloved brethren, depart from our greed and be satisfied with our lot, even as Paul writes: 'To whomsoever tribute is due, he shall be paid tribute; and to whomsoever custom is due, he shall be paid custom; and ye shall treat none with violence...'"<sup>1</sup>

The compiler of the *Initial Chronicle* draws a distinction between the earlier and the later periods, preferring the former, because then the princes and their men-at-arms fought against other lands and flourished at their expense, but did not impose heavy taxes on their own. The author of the *Chronicle* has no sympathy whatsoever for the new order of things. He undoubtedly prefers booty and tribute from conquered peoples as a source of the nobility's enrichment to the new way of assimilating large expanses of their own Russian land and the transformation of their hitherto free compatriots into their subjects who are henceforward forced to work not only for themselves, but also for their lords.

The facts give grounds for this periodization. The formative period of the large early feudal state, when the separate tribes were being merged into a people, was one of numerous wars aimed at constant territorial expansion mainly through the inclusion in the Ancient Rus state of

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<sup>1</sup>*First Novgorod Annals*, p. 2; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, pp. 103-04.

lands either previously occupied by neighbours, or threatened with such occupation. At this period, foreign relations are mainly limited to large-scale military campaigns and defence.

The social relations of this period are reflected in the early *Russkaya Pravda* which describes the men-at-arms who evoked the chronicler's sympathy. It is a usual thing for those dissatisfied with the present, to turn to the past. In such cases an idealization of the past is inevitable. Our author was no exception. For the militant men-at-arms, as we have seen, already possess their own land, *khormy* or castles and *chelyad*. In short, they own men whom they hold in bondage and live by the exploitation of the labour of others.

At that time, a strong state was needed by the ruling class, primarily to intensify and expand feudal exploitation. But the process of feudalization had not as yet taken on the intensity which was to be seen by the keen observer in the 11th century.

As a result of the work of preceding generations, the state reached the apogee of its might. Simultaneously, the danger of its dismemberment and weakening increased, as the local centres became stronger. The trends among the rulers in their demesnes in the localities became pronounced and ominous. The great was obviously being sacrificed to the small. This gave food for thought. Antiquity appeared in a different light: it seemed to have been full of vigour, glitter and glory. It was not the chronicler alone who was carried away by the exploits and achievements of his ancestors. The Metropolitan Hilarion and the author of the *Lay of Igor's Host* took a similar view of the past. Enthusiasm for the past was not foreign to the masses either, for they clearly distinguished the good and the evil, and remembered the colourful legends of antiquity. These images and ideals were revived with renewed vigour in Moscow, when hopes for the unification



of Rus flared up at Kulikovo.<sup>1</sup> The latter period in the people's history proved to be more complex and alarming. The sundering of the native land by the rulers in their demesnes, who had become a mighty force, was the greatest danger facing the country. The nobles mainly aspired to greater wealth and political power, and opposed the central authorities, their erstwhile supporters and aides in enrichment and now a fetter on their separatist tendencies.

The peasant community plays the role of victim in this process and the nobles grow rich at its expense.

The assimilation of land together with its population becomes particularly pronounced in the 10th and early 11th centuries. This was reflected in the contents of the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*. Its appearance was due to the ruling classes' need to protect the positions they had won, and it is easy to glimpse from the *Pravda* at whom and at what that law is aimed.

The administrator of the princely demesne (the *ognishchanin*), the collector of the prince's revenue (the *podyezdnoi*) and the prince's chief groom may be killed deliberately and with the manifest intent of doing away with them. The prince's property may be plundered, his servants killed, live and dead agricultural stock destroyed, his land ploughed up, his snares wrecked, etc. The prince's estate (and, of course, not only the prince's) is forced to take constant steps against the growing resistance of the peasants. We know that the peasant, a member of the community, was not allowed to live in peace, for he was directly threatened by the "violent and the proud," "those who seek glory" and "those who are not satisfied with

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<sup>1</sup> Kulikovo—the site of a historic battle between the Russians and the Tatar-Mongol invaders on September 8, 1380. The Russians led by Dmitry Donskoi routed the enemy. This victory helped the feudal principalities to unite around Moscow and was a landmark in Rus's liberation from the Tatar yoke.

See Д. С. Лихачев, Национальное самосознание древней Руси, М.—Л. 1945, стр. 75. (D. S. Likhachov, *The National Awareness of Ancient Rus*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945, p. 75.)

their estates," the rich landowners. This is quite clearly stated in the source-material. We see a sharpening of the struggle between the two main classes of feudal society. The class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited constitutes the basic feature of the feudal system.

In this process of feudalization the landowner (the prince, the man-at-arms, the Church) is the aggressive and victorious force which subjugates the free *smerd*, a member of the community, by means of economic and extra-economic coercion. We have seen the victims and the results of this process. They are the *zakups*, the *izgois*, the *ryadovichy*, the *sirotas*, the *smerds*, who became directly dependent on the feudal lord, the mendicants, the poor, drawn into the lord's service by earnest money and advances in corn. All these categories of dependents were either snatched up from the ranks of the free peasants or recruited from among freedmen.

It is clear why peasant movements, often combined with action by the urban masses, are reported during this period, a time of intensified feudal campaigns against the peasant masses.

We find no slave uprisings in the state of Ancient Rus such as were common in ancient societies. We can scarcely entertain the only hint at a very unlikely slave uprising, reported by Gerberstein in his *Notes*,<sup>1</sup> and already refuted by Tatishchev.<sup>2</sup> In any case, there is no reason to consider it at the moment without a special investigation of its origin.

Strange though it may seem, we know the social system of the "Kiev period" better than the subsequent period of fragmentation.

The dire effects of dismemberment and the Tatar cloud which threatened the world and then descended with all its baleful might on Rus, particularly on its north-east,

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<sup>1</sup> S. Gerberstein, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> V. N. Tatishchev, *op. cit.*, pp. 377-78.



led the Eastern Slavs along different roads and broke up Rus's recent though not very stable political entity.

The student of Kiev Rus's rural population is in particularly difficult circumstances. The gems which have been preserved, like the Rus chronicles, enable the scholar to study the inextinguishable political life of the vast country. But it must be admitted that the chroniclers pay very little attention to the rural population. It continued to plough. With its corn it fed itself and those who either could not or would not plough. It paid state taxes punctually and went to war, but the better the service it rendered, the less mention it got from the chronicler. At times mention had to be made. But this was at times when popular anger boiled over, when the tiller lost patience and the most peaceful of all implements—the scythe and the axe—became formidable weapons against his oppressors.

All the time it is clear to all that the peasant's labour was the basis of the existence of society and state.

The student has to overcome the obstacles and do everything he can to reconstruct the pattern of life of the rural masses in Kiev Rus. Otherwise the whole of Rus's complex history will be incomprehensible.

### 3. THE SMERD MOVEMENT

The free *smerd* was being threatened from all sides. The maturing state had need of men for its forces and supplies for war and peace. The princes and their kinsmen, who laid claims to a growing share of the good things of the earth, the princely retinues and boyars increased in number. The princes' and boyars' men-at-arms settled on the land. It was still vast and abundant and was still cultivated by peasant hands. But the number of people who cast greedy eyes on the peasant's bread had increased prodigiously and continued to grow.

The towns, particularly the big ones, both new and old,

(Kiev, Novgorod, Smolensk, Polotsk, Chernigov, Rostov, Suzdal, Vladimir, Galich, and very many others) demanded the peasant's produce. The enriched landowners, who continued to thrive, also preyed on the same source of material wealth. The new religion preached patience and obedience: "Every soul must obey the rulers, for 'there is no power except that which comes from God.' Slaves, obey your masters, and 'render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.'"

All this sounded strange to the peasant's untrained ear and spurred him on to protest. The peasant mass, naturally, preferred its old faith and remained faithful to its soothsayers. It eyed with suspicion the archbishops, archimandrites and priests, whether newly-arrived from Byzantium or of local origin, who were backed by the authorities.

This could not but give rise to dissatisfaction among the peasants.

This was the case not only in Rus. We find a similar situation in other European countries. Sooner or later, the peasants acted in defence of their rights and protested against the new ideas and new social relationships, the vehicle of unprecedented oppression.

The Russian chroniclers scarcely deal with the sentiments and behaviour of the peasantry. They are mostly concerned with enormous successes of the Rus state and the feats of its statesmen. Only occasionally the echoes of everyday events in the people's life find their way into the chronicles. But these events often had the most ominous significance for the privileged classes.

It was the Novgorod chronicler who first departed from the solemn style of the first Rus historians, after the *veche* had taken the lead in the political life of the territory. This chronicler gave some account of the common man whom that body sometimes gave the opportunity of officially stating his needs and aspirations.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we find so little on the peasant movement in the only source at our dis-



posal—the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*—in which we would have expected to find accounts of the peasant's reaction to the innovations which upset his traditional way of life. But a few facts are available and we should examine them.

The *Laurenty Annals* for 1024 say: "In that same year, the soothsayers appeared in Suzdal, and, instigated by the devil, assaulted the old *chad*, saying that they had hidden the food. There was a *great* insurrection (my italics.—*Author*) and famine throughout the land; all the people went along the Volga to the Bulgars and brought back corn and were thus saved. When Yaroslav heard of the soothsayers, he came to Suzdal (from Novgorod.—*Author*); he seized them, and some he banished, others he punished, saying thus: 'As a punishment for sins God sends to every country either famine or the pestilence, or drought, or some other punishment, and man knows nothing.'"<sup>1</sup> The chronicler closes his account of 1026 with the end of the war between Yaroslav and Mstislav, with the following words: "And the internecine war and *rebellion* (*усобица и мятежь*) (italics mine.—*Author*) ceased and there was a great peace throughout the land."<sup>2</sup>

The term *usobitsa* usually denotes feudal warfare, the word *myatezh* invariably indicates a popular movement against the authorities and the ruling classes.

Clearly, the people's protest against oppression assumes the form of an uprising when, for some reason, relations between the classes are aggravated. One such reason is famine. There is yet another factor—the protracted struggle first between Yaroslav and Svyatopolk the Damned, who brought the Poles and the Pechenegs to Rus, then between Yaroslav and Bryachislav of Polotsk, and, finally, between Yaroslav and Mstislav. This calamitous period lasted for ten years and ended in 1026.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, 1910, p. 144; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145, and p. 100.

Feudal wars, particularly on such a scale as that against Svyatopolk the Damned, which became an international conflict, ruined the rural population. Without doubt, the people were in turmoil throughout the country, but the chronicler recorded the Suzdal movement because, it may be surmised, it was led by the soothsayers, the natural leaders of the masses with whom they had close contact and among whom they had considerable authority. The chronicler reports that "there arose soothsayers," and that "when Yaroslav heard of the soothsayers, he came to Suzdal and seized them." These are clearly the leaders of a movement whom the masses followed.

The lower social orders were starving. The "old *chad*"—the rich—did not starve. They had abundant stores, for it was they who hid "the food." It was against them that the wrath of the people was directed.

There is frequent reference to these rich men in 11th and 12th century literature. The preachers frequently appeal to them not to misuse their power and to desist from using violence against the *smerds* and the *sirotas*. Clearly, such sermons were nowhere successful: the class struggle did not abate.

The movement of the Kiev folk against Izyaslav Yaroslavich in 1068 was mainly a movement of the urban masses. But it is difficult to draw a line between the urban masses and the rural population, not only in the 11th century, but also later. It may be assumed that the rural population also joined in this movement, as was the case in Kiev in 1113.

It was no accident that a soothsayer arrived in Kiev in the late sixties,<sup>1</sup> possibly from the Suzdal land, where, it appears, they were more numerous than in the Dnieper area, which was then more Christianized. This soothsayer was also "tempted by the devil" and began to stir up the lower classes.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years* for 1071 says: "At this time...", i.e., no certain date is given.



The author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* tries to caricature the soothsayer. He refers to details which are designed to win the reader's sympathies and ridicule the soothsayer and the devils with him. But it can scarcely be doubted that the chronicler made use of some kind of factual account of the soothsayer's activities in Kiev. In his attempts to demonstrate the absurdity of the latter's speeches, he reports him as saying that the Dnieper would flow back in its course four years hence, and that great international events were at hand ("the lands are to be moved to different places: the Greek land will stand in the place of Rus, and Rus in the place of the Greek land, and other lands will change places also").<sup>1</sup> But obviously it was not the soothsayer's purpose to give an international survey and foretell the future. This was only a means of stirring up the people. It seems that his mission was unsuccessful, for one night he suddenly disappeared without trace ("for one night nothing more was heard of him").

This fact gives the chronicler food for thought. He inserts a long treatise on the problem of devils and their influence on man. The devils incite man to evil and then make a laughing-stock of him and cast him down into "the mortal abyss." To prove this, the author adduces a number of facts: 1) the events in the Rostov land, where the soothsayer operated at the instigation of the devil; 2) the events in the Chud land, where a citizen of Novgorod went to see a soothsayer practising witchcraft; 3) the appearance of soothsayers in Novgorod in Prince Gleb's time.

These facts are either not dated at all, or only very obscurely ("at this time, in those years, a certain man from Novgorod came to Chud..."), but they are very interesting in themselves. There can be no doubt that they are based on reality. In the chronicler's account, it is mostly the devils, who confuse the soothsayers and these in

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 116. These are hints at some kind of international disturbances in the second half of the 11th century.

turn influence the masses. Such was the case in the Rostov land and in Novgorod.

The Rostov events are of particular interest. At first sight they give rise to suspicion. The reader is liable to confuse them with the events described in the item for 1024. There is the same famine, and the same soothsayer stirring up the *smerds* at the instigation of the devils. But when we examine the story more closely, we see that these are new events which took place either late in the sixties or early in the seventies of the 11th century.<sup>1</sup> First of all, the story is about Rostov and not Suzdal. It also refers to Prince Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, thus setting the date beyond 1054.

It was also during a famine that the soothsayers headed the *smerd* movement in the Rostov area. Here, too, they led the peasant mass against "the best," i.e., the rich people who not only were abundantly supplied during the famine, but who also hoarded food-stuffs (corn, honey, fish). The rich were killed and their property confiscated. The chronicler, it is true, reports only the killing of "the best women" and the confiscation of their property.<sup>2</sup> But we shall not be mistaken if we enlarge this circle of the rich who suffered during the *smerd* movement. It is doubtful whether the women's property was entirely their own, on the one hand, and on the other, whether their brothers, sons and husbands remained neutral during the extermination of their womenfolk. It is true that the chronicler says that the menfolk "brought to them (the two soothsayers.—*Author*) their sisters, mothers and wives ... and (the soothsayers) killed many women, and confiscated their property." But later the author gives us reason to think that this was done only by a few of the men. We infer this

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<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* does not date these events, but says: "Once a famine occurred in Rostov region...." (See 1910 ed., p. 170.)

<sup>2</sup> This probably pertains to the Mordva custom of entrusting women with the preservation of food-stuffs.



from a description of the revenge taken upon the soothsayers. It was the male relatives who did away with them ("killed them and hanged them on an oak"). It could scarcely have been otherwise. It was the wealthy section of the population of the Rostov region who were attacked by the *smerds* led by the soothsayers. It is, therefore, very natural to presume that the rich, who were threatened with death and loss of their property, could not have gone out to welcome the soothsayers, but must have protested, as was the case in Beloozero where these same soothsayers arrived with three hundred of their armed supporters.

The chronicle gives a very striking picture of this incident in Beloozero. The people of Beloozero appealed for help to a boyar of Prince Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, Yan Vyshatich. Fortunately for the wealthy inhabitants of Beloozero he happened to be in their district, having been dispatched thither by his prince to collect tribute. They complained of the outrages of the soothsayers ("for two soothsayers have killed many women along the Volga and the Sheksna, and are here"). Yan Vyshatich began by investigating who these people were (they turned out to be Prince Svyatoslav's *smerds*) and demanded that they be delivered to him.

The ensuing situation is very clear: a part of the Beloozero inhabitants complained and asked for military intervention by the authorities, while another section of the population supported the soothsayers and did not wish to give them up. It is obvious that the former were the rich and the noble, while the latter the *smerds* and kindred groups of the population.

Yan sided with the "best," and took up arms against the insurgent *smerds*. He won, the soothsayers were arrested, beaten up and their beards plucked out. They were punished at Yan's suggestion. He asked those who were escorting the arrested soothsayers: "Have these killed any of your kin?" And they answered: "My mother, another's sister, and another's relatives." Yan then said:

"Revenge your kinsmen." And the soothsayers were killed and hanged on an oak. The chronicler draws the following conclusion: "God meted out to them what was rightly due."<sup>1</sup>

The chronicler then tells of the insurrection (мятеж) organized by the soothsayer in Novgorod. Here, too, the soothsayer instigated the masses, mainly the urban, but also no doubt some sections of the rural population.

The soothsayer spoke against Christianity and supported the old heathen faith. It is noteworthy that "all the people followed the soothsayer; and there was great rebellion among them." Only Prince Gleb and his men-at-arms came out for Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Such a division of ideological sympathies is largely due to the fact that the masses linked the new religion with the changes in their economic and legal status, for the princes and their retinue, i.e., those attacking the old peasant community, justified their behaviour by the new religion. The soothsayers defended the old faith under which the *smerd* felt that he had been free.

A soothsayer appeared in the Rostov land once again in 1088, but he was, apparently, unsuccessful. The *Fourth Novgorod Annals* mention this event very obscurely and say laconically that the soothsayer "soon perished."<sup>3</sup>

The last time the soothsayers are mentioned as an ele-

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, 1910, pp. 171-73; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 119. This uprising of the *smerds* led by the soothsayers is the subject of several papers: A. B. Арциховский и С. В. Куселев, К истории восстания смердов 1071 г. (A. V. Artsikhovsky and S. V. Kiselyov, *The Smerd Uprising in 1071. Problemy Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, No. 7-8, 1933); B. B. Мавродин, К вопросу о восстаниях смердов (V. V. Mavrodin *The Smerd Uprising. Problemy Istorii Dokaipitalisticheskikh Obshchestv*, No 6, 1934); A. B. Арциховский, Миниатюры Кенигсбергской летописи (A. V. Artsikhovsky, *The Miniatures of the Koenigsberg Chronicle. Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, Vol. XIV, Issue 2, 1932, p. 34); also his Древнерусские миниатюры как исторический источник (*Ancient Rus Miniatures as a Historical Source*, Moscow, 1944, pp. 36-37); Н. Н. Воронин, Восстание смердов в XI веке (N. N. Voronin, *The Smerd Uprising in the 11th Century. Istoricheskyy Zhurnal*, No. 2, 1940).

<sup>2</sup> *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, 1910, p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> *Fourth Novgorod Annals*, 1915, p. 135.



ment threatening the existing system is in the *First Novgorod Annals* for 1227, which say that four soothsayers were burnt alive in Yaroslav's bailey in Novgorod.<sup>1</sup> The charges against them are unknown. Since they were tried and executed in Novgorod, we may infer that they operated in the Novgorod land.

It is noteworthy that, parallel to the *smerd* movement in Rus, similar peasant movements were afoot in neighbouring Poland, and that in both places they were in defence of the heathen faith. The Polish sources date these events to 1034 and 1077.<sup>2</sup>

However, the soothsayers took no part in the biggest movement of 1113 in Kiev. It was carried out by the lower classes of the urban population with the participation of the peasants. It is noteworthy in that it matured among the mass of the people and was carried out without the soothsayers. It had a more clear-cut aim and put forward definite demands, which had to be considered by the authorities, represented by a wise statesman, Vladimir Monomakh.

This movement is briefly described in the *Ipaty Annals*. It flared up on the morrow of Svyatopolk's death. He did everything to alienate the Kiev masses. Even the monks of the Kiev Pechera Monastery, trained in reverence of the authorities, had a poor opinion of him. ("Svyatopolk did much harm to people, he razed to the ground the houses of the strong without reason, and seized the estates of many.") His cupidity and abuse of power are mentioned elsewhere in *The Lives*.<sup>3</sup> His widow apparently expected

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<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, 1888, p. 224; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> Г. Шмитт, История польского народа, т. I, СПб 1864, стр. 38, 49—50. (A. Shmitt, *History of the Polish People*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1864, pp. 38, 49-50.) А. Н. Пыпин и В. Д. Спасович, История славянских литератур, т. II, СПб 1881, стр. 457. (A. N. Pypin and V. D. Spasovich, *A History of Slavonic Literatures*, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1881, p. 457.)

<sup>3</sup> *The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, pp. 106, 107-08, 208.

an outburst of popular indignation and tried to avert it by unprecedented generosity. ("His princess divided up so much wealth among the cloisters, and the priests, and the poor, that everyone was astonished, because no one could be so generous.") But it was of no avail: on the morning of April 17 (Svyatopolk died on April 16) "the Kievites conferred and sent for Vladimir, saying: 'Come, prince, and ascend the throne of your father and grandfathers.'" This appeal to Vladimir Monomakh was in itself symptomatic. He was well known as a champion of Rus unity and an opponent of that section of the feudal nobility which benefited from political fragmentation. He had often clashed with Svyatopolk after the latter, with David's aid, had blinded Vasilyok Rostislavich; he defended the monk Prokhor when Svyatopolk tried to incarcerate him in Turov; Svyatopolk would have done so "had not Vladimir Monomakh opposed him."<sup>1</sup>

At the Lubech Congress of 1097 he expounded his point of view. Like a realistic politician, he did not ask for the impossible. He recognized the rights won by the feudal lords, but considered it necessary to limit them to the extent demanded by the integrity of the state.

Tatishchev reports that the "council" mentioned by the *Ipaty Annals* was convened in the Kiev Sophia.<sup>2</sup> This indicates that it was a meeting mainly of Kiev's upper classes. The *Lay of Boris and Gleb* in the Synodal Sylvester collection, published by Sreznevsky, discusses the 1113 events and the part played by the Kiev nobility in inviting Monomakh. "When Svyatopolk died ... there was a great uprising and sedition, and great confusion among the people; all the people gathered, *while the richer and nobler men* went with a decision of all the people and implored Vladimir to come and put an end to the disturbance among them. And he came, and quelled the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Lives of the Fathers of the Kiev Pechera Monastery*, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> V. N. Tatishchev, op. cit., Book 2, p. 211.



uprising and disturbance among the people."<sup>1</sup> "The rich and noble men" were alarmed by the popular movement. They decided to invite a prince who, according to a decision of the Lubech Congress, had no right to Kiev, but who was popular among the feudal lords who supported Monomakh's programme.

Vladimir Monomakh refused the invitation. "The Kievites," the chronicler reports, "plundered Putyata's bailey, and went against the Jews and plundered them." Putyata was a close associate of Svyatopolk, and was the first to suffer.

Then followed a second appeal to Vladimir: "Come to Kiev, prince. If thou dost not come, know that there will be great calamity. It will be not only Putyata's bailey, or those of the centurions, but they shall plunder also the Jews and even your own daughter-in-law, and the boyars, and the monasteries, and thou shalt be held responsible, prince, if the monasteries are plundered." Vladimir agreed. "He came and quelled the uprising and disturbance among the people." That, according to the author of the *Lay of Boris and Gleb*, was the result of Monomakh's arrival in Kiev.

"The uprising and disturbance among the people" is a broad definition of a mass movement which could include not only the people of the city but also the villagers who are always connected with the towns in some manner.

But we have still more conclusive proof that this was a movement which involved town and village in Vladimir Monomakh's legislation. There is no precise and detailed description of the means used by Monomakh to "quell" the uprising. The *Ipaty Annals* are much too brief on this point. "Vladimir Monomakh sat in Kiev for a week . . . and all the people were happy, and the uprising died down." The *Russkaya Pravda* gives a much more elaborate answer.

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<sup>1</sup> I. I. Sreznevsky, op. cit., p. 86.

"After the death of Svyatopolk, Vladimir gathered his men-at-arms in Berestov: Ratibor, the Kiev millenary (the hated Putyata had been removed), Stanislav, the Pereyaslav millenary, Nazhir, Miroslav, Ivank Chudinovich, Oleg's man, and annulled the debts on which interest had been paid for three years." The conference was held as soon as Vladimir Monomakh arrived in Kiev, because the Kiev events required prompt action.<sup>1</sup>

The conference beyond doubt debated measures to quell the popular uprising. It is clear that apart from reprisals, Vladimir resorted to other measures: he was forced to make concessions to the masses, urban as well as rural. This is sufficient evidence that the movement involved town and village.

The townsfolk were oppressed mainly by the usurers, and the peasants by the feudal landowners. The law which was adopted at the conference took into account the needs of the oppressed in the towns and villages.

The statutes on interest, on the *zakups* and the *kholops* were the main enactments, and this alone appeared to be sufficient to pacify the insurgents and give Vladimir Monomakh the right to insert in his autobiography the phrase that he "protected the poor *smerd* and the lowly widow from the strong." Tikhomirov quotes the Metropolitan Nikifor's message to Vladimir Monomakh confirming this.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tikhomirov submits proof that the meeting was held before August 8, 1113 (according to the *Laurenty Annals*; and it is August 1, according to the *Ipaty Annals*)—when Oleg Svyatoslavich died. (M.N. Tikhomirov, op. cit., p. 209.) Svyatopolk died on April 16, 1113, and the uprising started on April 17. The negotiations with Vladimir Monomakh probably lasted a fortnight. It is not known exactly when Vladimir arrived in Kiev. The *Ipaty Annals* report the events of that year without any mention of month or day, and it is only in the item for September 1, 1113 that they say that Vladimir Monomakh arranged the marriage of his son Roman. Before that, the Vladimir Monomakh's government had contrived to organize a coalition against the Polovtsy and ousted them. It effected a number of changes in the government system. The conference, obviously, preceded these events, for he could not devote himself to these affairs before quelling the popular movement in the capital.

<sup>2</sup> "Set an example of ardent prayer, and attendance at church, give alms to the poor, and return debts to the debtors. If that is impossible, at



If we do not confine ourselves to the formal evidence, which is insufficient to justify any conclusions, but base our investigations on the part of the *Russkaya Pravda* entitled *The Statutes of Vladimir Vsevolodich*, we shall see that: 1) that part of the *Pravda* (in the main, of course, because later insertions are possible and even inevitable) was really drawn up by Vladimir Monomakh; 2) it is imbued with a single idea and is unquestionably connected with the events of 1113.

It is clear that this legislation on debtors, *zakups* and *kholops* originated at a time when class contradictions had become more acute. The legislation on the debtors does not require elaborate comment, for it is quite clear. The *zakups* were dealt with above. It is obvious that the legislator resorted to compromise and partially satisfied the demands of the common people who suffered from the arbitrary actions of the rich landowners. There were *kholops* in the villages as well as in the towns. Their circumstances were also improved. This indicates that they too participated in the 1113 movement.<sup>1</sup>

We shall glean a few additional interesting facts if we continue our observations of the resistance of the rural population to oppression. The well-known events of 1136

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least forego the high interest which, as a serpent, devours.... If thou fastest but takest usury from thy brother, thou has no gain because thou cuttest his veins and killest him, as with a sharp knife, by thy dishonest usury, demanding that he pay an exorbitant interest...." "God has raised thee, our wise ruler and worthy prince, as a real defender who put in order the work of the courts of law, preserved the truth and meted out justice and punishment throughout the land... and adorned thy legislation, which as marvellous walls defends thy Christian flock." (M. N. Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 210-11.)

<sup>1</sup> Much has been written on this movement which, of course, should not pass unnoticed. Pokrovsky has called this movement "the second Kiev revolution" stressing the participation of the urban and rural poor. (M.N. Pokrovsky, *Russian History From Earliest Times*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1933, pp. 79-80.) See also N. A. Rozhkov, *Comparative Studies in Russian History*, Vol. I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1930, p. 184. Yushkov has also frequently referred to this subject. See also V.V. Mavrodin, *The Smerd Uprising*, (*Problemy Istorii Dokaipitalisticheskikh Obshchestv*, No. 6, 1934); and Tikhomirov, op. cit., pp. 208-11.

in Novgorod, which led to republican forms of political life in the city, indicate primarily action by the urban population, which is very well portrayed by the Novgorod chronicler, who, however, implies that the movement was not limited to the urban lower orders but also included the *smerds*. Prince Vsevolod was accused on several counts, primarily of ignoring the interests of the *smerds* and allowing the "strong to harm them," as Monomakh would have put it.<sup>1</sup> It is inconceivable that the article in defence of the *smerds* should have been inserted without any participation on their part.

There is possibly another suggestion of active protest by the rural population in the description of the events in Kiev after Yury Dolgoruky's death. According to the *Ipaty Annals*, "much evil was done on that day: his magnificent palace was plundered and another one plundered beyond the Dnieper, which he himself called a 'paradise,' and the palace of his son Vasilyok was plundered in the city; the Suzdal people were assaulted in town and village, and their goods seized."<sup>2</sup>

Mavrodin believes this to have been a protest against the Suzdal boyars who with impunity "turned the *smerds* into serfs." It may well be that the Suzdal boyars who arrived with Yury Dolgoruky were indeed to blame. But it appears that it is not the boyars but the Suzdal merchants who are involved here. "The Suzdal people were assaulted in town and village and their goods seized," we are told. The Suzdal merchants, as various sources, including the treaties between Novgorod and the Suzdal princes report, were highly enterprising people and travelled throughout Rus with their goods. They must also have gone to the Dnieper area. It was they who were under Prince Yury's protection, and who suffered after his death.

After the murder of Andrei Bogolubsky not only the

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<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, p. 129; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 336.



urban population, but also the villagers took part in the events stirred up in Bogolubov by the sharpening class contradictions ("robbers also came from the village to plunder"). The villagers of Bogolubov naturally had sufficient reason to protest. But this was not 1071, nor yet 1113.

We have an excellent analogy to these events in Novgorod in 1209. This was a real urban and rural movement which resulted in political changes in the Novgorod government. The participation of the *smerds* is proved by the following facts: 1) the chronicle connects the uprising against the Miroshkinichy and the flight of the *smerds* with the dire circumstances in which the rural population lived; 2) when Mikhail, the new prince, arrived from Chernigov he deemed it necessary to lighten the burden of the rural population. He gave fugitive *smerds* a moratorium on dues so that they should return to their homes. His measures were successful. The chronicler considered it necessary to observe that "life became easier in the Novgorod *volost*."

There remains, therefore, no shadow of a doubt that peasant movements, as a form of protest by the rural population against oppression, were well known in Kiev Rus. They were purely anti-feudal popular movements of the kind common in all European countries, and were caused by the vigorous attacks of the feudal lords upon the peasant community, the peasant land and peasant labour.

Those who refuse to recognize the existence of dependent *smerds* in Kiev Rus will find the peasant movement a riddle.

With the growth of the cities and the urban *veche* assemblies, the urban masses become the initiators of popular movements. The village population follows in their wake.

Our observations of economic and social relationships in Kiev Rus, particularly the circumstances of the rural population, may be summed up as follows:

1. Agriculture had for a long time been the main occupation of the population, and had a direct effect on the origin of classes and on the history of their relationships.

2. Since agriculture had played a vital role in our country's history since olden times, problems of land tenure and its origins, the structure of the demesne and the categories of the dependent population are very important. Without a study of these we are unable to understand either our past or our history in later times.

3. The origin of private land tenure cannot be dated precisely. Private land tenure unquestionably existed in the Volkhov and Dnieper basins in the period from the 7th to the 9th centuries.

4. There is sufficiently valid material on the 9th-11th centuries at our disposal to enable us to draw a picture of the Ancient Rus demesne and the relationships within it.

5. The princely, boyar and church demesne, according to 11th-century reports, was an organized agricultural unit based on the exploitation of serf and slave labour. The latter, it should be said, was decidedly inferior to the more progressive feudal method of production (serf labour).

6. A comparatively limited agricultural economy was carried on by the lord within the large demesne, and it was worked by the *chelyad* (labour rent).

7. There were no incentives for the big landowner to expand his economy, since agricultural products had not as yet become of any appreciable value either on domestic or external markets.

8. The rich, who strove to extend their holdings, had already contrived to build up the superstructure they needed (the state). Backed by the government, they systematically increased their land holdings and the number of their subjects through land grants from the



princes, thus paving the way for the transformation of the lord of the manor into sovereign, and the demesne into a seignior.

9. In the period from the 9th to the 11th centuries a substantial part of the population in Kiev Rus consisted of free peasants, members of the community who were being systematically turned into serfs in the course of feudalism's intensive development.

10. The men-at-arms who were given landholdings swelled the ranks of the landowners and, as a result, the number of independent *smerds* was being systematically reduced.

11. The stepped-up onslaught of the feudal lords against the peasant mass aroused its protest in the form of repeated hostile acts against the oppressors and sporadic armed uprisings.

12. The penal system in the *Russkaya Pravda* is designed to protect the interests of the feudal lords in face of the dissatisfaction of the oppressed masses and, above all, the peasantry.





**VI. MAJOR ASPECTS  
OF KIEV RUS'S POLITICAL  
SYSTEM**





## 1. INTRODUCTORY NOTES

I shall not give the full historiography on the political system in Kiev Rus, but shall confine myself to a number of examples.

Solovyov bases his periodization of Russian history on inter-princely relations. These, he believes, express "the natural development of society from within itself." His first period ranges from "the invitation of Ryurik" to Andrei Bogolubsky, when "princely relationships are purely tribal in nature." His second extends from Andrei to Ivan Kalita, when "attempts are being made to replace tribal relations, as a result of which a struggle begins between the princes of northern and southern Rus whose aims conflicted; after the division of the tribe this struggle gives way to the efforts of each of the principalities to strengthen itself at the expense of the others, and the final victory rests with the Moscow principality." His third period ends with Ivan III, when the "Moscow rulers ensure the predominance of state relationships over the tribal." Finally, the fourth period culminates in the "extinction of the Ryurikovichy line," i.e., a period in which state relationships finally triumph over the tribal, "a triumph won at the cost of a horrible and bloody struggle with the moribund order."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> С. М. Соловьев, История отношений между русскими князьями Рюрикова дома, М. 1847, стр. IX—X. (S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Relations Between the Princes of the House of Ryurik*, Moscow, 1847, pp. IX-X.)

But in spite of the dominance of "the tribal order" in Solovyov's first period, there is an event which Solovyov himself regards as the inception of the Russian state. This is the notorious "invitation of the Varangians." "The invitation of the first princes," says the author, "is a highly important event in our history. It is an event of nation-wide significance and it is rightly considered as the beginning of Russian history."<sup>1</sup> In other words, Solovyov distinguished several periods in the history of the East Slav state, and it appears that, with certain reservations, he regarded the first also as being a period of statehood (in its initial stage).

Sergeyevich does not apparently single out any periods in the history of Ancient Rus. He sees the same social and political principles in the 10th century as in the 16th. "...The earliest ruling princes in our history, the brothers Svyatoslavichy (sons of Svyatoslav Igorevich—*Author*) settle their differences either by war or by peaceful means. This was so in the second half of the 10th century, and we find a similar picture later, right up to the final disappearance of the appanage princes (in the 16th century.—*Author*)."<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere he says: "Our past knows no uniform 'Russian state'; it is a period when numerous petty states exist simultaneously. These petty states are called *volosts*, lands, principalities, appanages, princely demesnes and *uyezds*."<sup>3</sup>

In Sergeyevich's opinion, relationships between these states, represented by their princes, remain unchanged for several centuries. They are based on treaties and family rights. The former govern relations between princes who are kinsmen in every imaginable degree of consanguinity. Family rights determine the relationships between princely kinsmen in the descending line, involving rela-

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<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *Russian History from Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 1.



tionships between parents and children. "The subordination of children to their parents was expressed in the fact that sons were never independent ruling princes in the lifetime of their father. Whenever they received a *volost* to administer independently, they always remained vicegerents of the prince, their father, and not independent owners."<sup>1</sup>

Sergeyevich therefore does not single out any special period which preceded the "appanage period," the period of feudal fragmentation. Sergeyevich sees the slight difference in the political systems of pre-appanage Rus and appanage Rus in the absence of princely kinsmen in the collateral line in the "former period," when only the sons of one father, the Kiev prince, were recognized.

Vladimirsky-Budanov approaches the problem from another angle. He believes that the various lands, merged in a union of *volosts* and suburbs under the rule of a leading city, were under state jurisdiction even before the "invitation of the Varangians." "The Varangian princes found an organized state system throughout the country."<sup>2</sup> He does not deny that "the Ryurikovichy dynasty" paved the way for a *rapprochement* between the separate lands. This took the form of obligations undertaken by the lands to pay tribute to Kiev and manifested itself in the fact that they were under the Kiev prince. But the author does not recognize the unity of the state of Ancient Rus. He believes that there was greater integration during the "appanage period" than during the preceding period.

In this respect Dyakonov is similar to Vladimirsky-Budanov. He declares that certain aspects of Russian Slav life before "the invitation of the Varangian princes" warrant the recognition of the existence of statehood. In Ancient Rus, he says, "we see a considerable number of petty states whose frontiers were subject to constant

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 121-22.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Survey of the History of Russian Law*, p. 14.

change... These Ancient Rus states are called lands, principalities, *volosts*, *uyezds* and *demesnes*."<sup>1</sup>

Kluchevsky considers "the first local political form, which took shape in Rus about the second half of the 9th century" to be an "urban region, i.e., a trading area administered by a fortified *gorod*, which simultaneously served as the industrial centre for the area." "A secondary local form," he believes, were the "Varangian principalities": "Ryurik's principality in Novgorod, Sineus's in Beloozero, Truvor's in Izborsk, Askold's in Kiev... Rogvold's in Polotsk and Turov's in Turov." He thinks that this list is incomplete because "such principalities emerged in other parts of Rus as well, but later disappeared without trace." "A third political form took shape as a result of the combination of the Varangian principalities and the independent urban regions: this was the Grand Principality of Kiev," which became a trading and political centre and served to unite Slavs as well as non-Slavs. The Kiev principality "became the nucleus of that alliance of Slav and neighbouring Finnish tribes which must be considered the initial form of the Russian state." "The Russian state was founded as a result of the activities of Askold, and, later, Oleg in Kiev. It was in Kiev and not in Novgorod that the political unification of the Russian Slavs originated."<sup>2</sup>

Presnyakov's opinion on the subject is contained in his paper entitled *Princely Right* and his lectures on the history of Kiev Rus given in 1907-08 and 1915-16. In the latter, he describes the formation of the Ancient Rus state and its various stages. As early as Igor's time, he says, the Kiev centre was a bulwark of princely rule, a fortified centre in "the Kiev hills," connected with other urban centres, which were ruled by other "princes" "under the Kiev prince." The aims of the prince are defined by Presnyakov as follows: "Domination over the Slav ele-

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Dyakonov, op. cit., pp. 68 and 70.

<sup>2</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part I, pp. 131-44.



ments, the collection of tribute and the recruiting of a military force to be organized around the nucleus of the Varangian men-at-arms for large-scale campaigns against the Pechenegs and Byzantium."<sup>1</sup> After Igor's death, the author notes, "there was a desire to achieve a stable organization of the Kiev state and assimilate the new culture."<sup>2</sup> "The Kiev centre had completed its subjugation of the other lands in southern Rus by the time of Vladimir," "who consummated the work of the preceding princes in setting up and consolidating princely rule."<sup>3</sup>

Vladimir defined the frontiers of his state and "lived in peace with the neighbouring princes: with Boleslav of Poland, and Stephen of Hungary, and Andrich of Czechia."<sup>4</sup>

Similar ideas are expressed in Presnyakov's *Princely Right in Ancient Rus*. In this he says that the state of Ancient Rus was being organized in the period before Yaroslav: "It was different in the times before Yaroslav when all the Eastern Slavs were subject to the undivided, even if only external, rule of the Kiev prince, and Kiev could be regarded as the centre of the nascent state."<sup>5</sup>

Far from doubting the existence of Ancient Rus, Grushhevsky outlines its history. He devotes several chap-

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<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, op. cit., pp. 78-79. Cf. p. 81. I underline the part which gives us an idea of the author's views on the political system in Rus. I leave aside his assertion that it was southern trade that was instrumental in bringing about this organization.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 96. (Italics mine.—*Author*.) The example cited by Rubinstein in his introduction to Presnyakov's lectures, to show how the latter defines the political system of Kiev Rus, is not a happy one: "It was the rule of one prince over a number of *volosts*, without their being internally merged into a single state." Rubinstein apparently infers from this that Presnyakov recognized Kiev Rus as a state only with the greatest reservations (see *Istoriik-Marxist*, No. 1, 1938, p. 130 et al.). But that is not the case. In the first place, the text quoted does not say that and, in the second, it is one of the author's earliest statements on the subject. Rubinstein himself notes in his introduction that the material up to p. 143 dates back to 1907-08, while the texts I quote above date to 1915-16.

<sup>4</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 996; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 86.

<sup>5</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Princely Right in Ancient Rus*, pp. 62-63.

ters to it, tracing the emergence of the Kiev state, its organization, its history from Oleg's time to Svyatoslav's, the state under Igor, Oleg and Svyatoslav, its final shaping under Vladimir and its disintegration in the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>1</sup> I do not propose to examine his unscientific approach, I merely note his recognition of a long period in our history, which the author tries to adapt to the history of the Ukraine alone by a manifest falsification of the sources.<sup>2</sup>

Shakhmatov argues that the state of Ancient Rus was not the first stage in the history of Eastern Slav statehood. He believes that there had already existed two state centres, headed by Kiev and Novgorod, prior to the formation of the state of Ancient Rus which united the basin of "the great water-way from the Varangians to the Greeks." In addition, he says, there were other "Scandinavian states," which appeared in the East European plain.

Shakhmatov recognizes the existence of a still earlier political alliance of the Eastern Slavs with their centre at Volyn. "The unification of the Eastern Slav lands around Kiev," he says, "was completed as early as the 10th century. Thanks to its position, Kiev became not only the political, but also the cultural centre of the entire area around the Dnieper and the adjacent lands." "This proves that the Eastern Slavs, previously in a state of fragmentation, were merged into a single family linked by political and cultural bonds." Shakhmatov calls this family "a body politic."<sup>3</sup>

The examples cited show that in spite of the diversity of opinion on the state of Ancient Rus and its origins,

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<sup>1</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, op. cit., Vols. I and II.

<sup>2</sup> For my opinion on his "theory" see below.

<sup>3</sup> A. A. Шахматов, Древнейшие судьбы русского племени, П. 1919, стр. 63. (A. A. Shakhmatov, *The Earliest History of the Russian Tribe*, Petrograd, 1919, p. 63.) Also his Очерк древнейшего периода истории русского языка, П. 1915, стр. XIX. (*An Outline of the Earliest Period of the History of Russian Language*, Petrograd, 1915, p. XIX.)



the more prominent bourgeois scholars of the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries recognized the existence of the "Kiev period" in the history of our statehood (Solovyov with the reservations mentioned above).

The enduring interest shown by scholars in the state of Ancient Rus is indicated by a special article entitled "The Kiev State in the Second Half of the 10th century," published by Priselkov in 1941, in which the author sets out his views on the subject.

The author sets himself the task of studying the state of Ancient Rus in the second half of the 10th century with the aid of Byzantine sources, because he considers the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* to be "an artificial and highly unreliable" source, whereas the Greek sources are allegedly "more reliable." Among the latter he considers: 1) the treaties with the Greeks. These, it will be recalled, are reported by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* which the author rejects; 2) the writings of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, a Russophobe, who cannot be impartial in his accounts of Rus. Furthermore, he wrote far away from the scene of the events he was describing; 3) the *History of Leo the Deacon* which has little to do with Rus and concentrates on Svyatoslav's Bulgarian campaign.

Having restricted himself to a narrow circle of sources and having accepted Byzantine information as being *a priori* more reliable than Russian, the author attempts to depict the state of Ancient Rus in a manner as audacious as it is unconvincing. But, as far as I can judge, the author recognizes the existence of the state of Ancient Rus in the 10th century. He writes of its territorial expansion, the gradual assimilation by the Kiev princely house of the separate regions, the elimination of the local authorities and the installation of the prince's sons in the conquered territories. Priselkov traces this process from "the middle of the 10th century to the

second half of the 11th" without, apparently, seeing his way to consider this process in the earlier period. This, however, renders the history of Ancient Rus in the first half of the 10th century and also in the 9th unintelligible. He presumes that this process also continued in the second half of the 11th century. This, of course, cannot be substantiated. The state of Ancient Rus could not have been growing in that period, because it had by then shown obvious signs of fragmentation.<sup>1</sup>

Pokrovsky takes a singular stand on the subject. "One can speak of a united Russian state in the Kiev period," he says, "only as a result of obvious misunderstanding." It further transpires that the author not only denies the existence of a unified Russian state in the period. He does not believe there was any state at all. Dealing with the *smerns* and refuting the view that they were "state peasants," he flatly declares: "One can hardly expect to find state property, dead or live, where no state existed." "There was no ground for the existence of a 'unified' state, or, for that matter, of any state at all, in the modern sense of the word." This opinion is not accidental, for in another paper he makes a much clearer statement to this effect. He believes that "social classes appear... in the history (of Russia—*Author*) rather late." He sets the date at "approximately the 16th century." "But was there any kind of state authority before that?" he asks. "No, there was not, because the associations in Rus prior to the formation of the Muscovite state under Ivan IV, which were first tribal, then military and commercial, and later feudal and agricultural in character, were scarcely what we should call 'a state.'"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> М. Д. Приселков, Киевское государство второй половины X в. по византийским источникам. (M. D. Priselkov, "The Kiev State in the Second Half of the 10th Century, According to Byzantine Sources.")

<sup>2</sup> М. Н. Pokrovsky, *An Outline of the History of Rus Culture*, Part I, 1921, p. 245. He reiterates this view in his *Russian History: a Brief Account*. Moscow-Petrograd, 1923: "There was no punishment initially,



The author himself was frequently hampered by the restrictions imposed by his own theory. However, I shall not cite examples of his deviations from his clearly expressed viewpoint so as not to transcend the framework of the present book.

Here is an analysis of papers by Soviet scholars who do not agree with me.

After the publication of the second edition of my *Feudal Relations*, Bakhrushin published several papers dealing with the state of Ancient Rus.<sup>1</sup> Rubinstein also published his brief but very informative *review* and his introduction to Presnyakov's lectures.<sup>2</sup>

Rubinstein holds that the "empire of the Ryurikovichy," or the "Kiev state," which is the same thing, was not a period in our history corresponding to the large West-European early feudal state which was consummated under Charlemagne and which gave rise to the main West-European states (France, Italy and Germany). It was only a transition period, he believes, from tribal society to class feudal society, which the author views as a period of feudal fragmentation. This transition period, he thinks, lasted about 30 years, i.e., it covers the rule of Vladimir I. He holds that those who think that the state of Ancient Rus existed for a longer period (more than 200 years) and played a more substantial and conspicuous role, are in danger of reverting to "the old conception of the disintegration of the unified state, the decline of highly developed Kiev Rus."

because urban Rus in the 10th and 11th centuries knew no social classes as yet." (P. 22.)

<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *The Baptism of Kiev Rus. Istorik-Marxist*, No. 2, 1937; his *Problems of Ancient Rus History. Istorik-Marxist*, No. 3, 1937; *Держава Рюриковичей (The State of the Ryurikovichy. Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 2 (3), 1938).

<sup>2</sup> Н. Л. Рубинштейн, Рецензия на сборник документов "Памятники истории Киевского государства" (N. L. Rubinstein, *Review of a Collection of Documents entitled "Documents Relating to the History of the Kiev State," Istorik-Marxist*, No. 1, 1938), and his *Introduction to A. Y. Presnyakov's "Lectures"* (A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I).

Bakhrushin is more lenient with those who are prepared to recognize Kiev Rus as being "unified" and highly "developed" (comparatively, of course, and bearing in mind the evolution of "unification" and "culture"). As far as I can judge from scattered observations, he sees two periods in the history of the state of Ancient Rus: "The period of ephemeral unity" and "the period of integration." "We do not discover any signs of a stable and organized state prior to the last quarter of the 10th century," he says.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he adds: "The ephemeral unity of Rus... was established scarcely earlier than Svyatoslav's time. It is curious that the representatives of the petty princes with the exception of Sveneld, whom the chronicler also considers as being the most powerful of Igor's vassals, are not mentioned in Svyatoslav's treaty." "The state as an integral polity begins to take shape only late in the 10th century," he concludes.<sup>2</sup> In another paper the author is still more cautious in his statements regarding the emergence of the feudal nobility late in the 10th century, and calls them "the future feudal lords" (cf. his recognition of Sveneld as "the most powerful of Igor's vassals"), who lacked only Christianity in order to "sanctify their claims to domination in the Dnieper area."<sup>3</sup>

In the thirties, Bakhrushin was of the opinion that the polity which concluded the agreements with the Greeks, under Oleg and Igor at least, and possibly under Svyatoslav as well, was not yet a state. What then was Rus at that time? He answers this very legitimate and inevitable question in his *The State of the Rurikovichy*. It was, he says, a "combination of the survivals of a military democracy" with "elements of the nascent feudal

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *Problems of Ancient Rus History* (*Istorik-Marxist*, No. 3, 1937, p. 167).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *The Baptism of Kiev Rus* (*Istorik-Marxist*, No. 2, 1937, p. 55).



state."<sup>1</sup> In his opinion it was the men-at-arms who then constituted the power of the Rus prince, whose basic function was "military leadership" and "plundering the population." This prince is "opposed by the free members of the community on whom tribute is imposed." There is as yet no "serfdom."<sup>2</sup> In the forties, Bakhrushin discarded this view.<sup>3</sup>

It is self-evident that the early feudal states take shape under certain conditions, but only on the ruins of the tribal system. We are in a position to define the metes and bounds separating the tribal system from the state system. First of all, of course, there is the lack of classes characteristic of the tribal system. In the final period in its history we have the following institutions: the popular assembly, the council of the tribal elders and the military chieftain.

With the development of the class system these institutions no longer satisfy the needs of society, the existence of some of them becomes impossible and the tribal organization of society comes to an end. It is replaced by the state, which either reorganizes the institutions of the tribal system, or replaces them with new ones, but not of course overnight. It is a protracted process. But if we are unable to trace its various stages on the basis of the sources at our disposal, we have no right to blind ourselves to the facts. We should have the courage to call a spade a spade. If, for instance, the tribal alliances have been replaced by territorial units, if the authorities have already become divorced from the masses, if the strongest economic class has already assumed power, and if it has organized the apparatus of

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *The State of the Ryurikovichy* (*Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 2 (3), 1938, p. 98 et al.).

<sup>2</sup> I do not consider it necessary to return to a discussion of this important problem. Every reader of my book will discover that it is an attempt to understand Kiev Rus in a different light. Rybakov's *Handicrafts in Ancient Rus* fully sustains my view.

<sup>3</sup> *Pod Znamenem Marxizma*, No. 7-8, 1943, pp. 102-03.

government, we can safely say that the tribal system has been replaced by the state.

I believe that I have succeeded in demonstrating that we are justified in speaking of the emergence of classes in the 6th-8th centuries. By the 8th-9th centuries, the existence of these classes is evident, and the same can be said of the 10th-12th centuries, but with even greater emphasis. We have, then, every ground for speaking of the emergence of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Let us turn to our ancient sources for some details.

What was the chronicler's view of Kiev Rus? Did he regard it as a state as he understood the term? These are not idle questions. It should be borne in mind that the chronicler constantly speaks of such states whose existence is not disputed by even those unwilling to accept such a term as applied to Kiev Rus. The chronicler formulates his task in the following words: "The chronicle of ancient years: when the Russian land arose, who first began to rule in Kiev, and how the Russian land came to be."

What does the chronicler imply by the term "Russian land?" Was it a purely geographical conception or also political? And if it was political, what then was its precise nature? Vladimirsky-Budanov resolutely asserts that the chronicler used "land" to mean the state, and not merely a geographical area. The author cites highly convincing facts to prove this contention. I take the liberty of reiterating some of them here.

He pointed out that the term "land" was also used by the chronicler to designate the neighbouring foreign states. "When the Hungarians defeated the Slavs and established their own state, 'from that time it became known as the land of the Ugrians.'" The Moravian princes appealed to the Byzantine emperor to send them a teacher of the Christian faith and said thus: "Our land

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<sup>1</sup> For details see my *Rus's Struggle for the Formation of Her Own State*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945. (Б. Д. Греков, Борьба Руси за создание своего государства.)



is baptized, but we have no teacher." After Igor made peace with the Greeks "he ordered the Pechenegs to attack the Bulgarian land," i.e., a state hostile to Byzantium. After the death of Boleslav the Great there was "an uprising" in the Polish state. Our chronicler reports it in the following words: "Boleslav the Great died among the Poles and there was an uprising in the Polish land." Our own Prince Svyatoslav used the term "land" in a similar sense when he said: "I wish to live in Pereyaslavets on the Danube, because it is the centre of my land." "In order to get at the legal meaning (of the term—*Author*)," says Vladimírsky-Budanov, "the most important thing is to find out how the state of that period is called in treaties concluded between two states. Oleg's treaty declares: if a Greek ship is wrecked, the Russians are obliged to take it to 'the krestyan land (which is synonymous with the 'Christian kingdom,' Art. 14) and if the shipwreck occurs near the Russian land 'we shall take it to the Rus land.' When Oleg's envoys returned to Kiev, they 'told Oleg of the words of both kings and how peace and a treaty was concluded between the Greek and the Russian land.' We find a similar usage in the *Russkaya Pravda* (the established *Pravda* of the Rus land) as well as numerous instances in the *Lay of Igor's Host* ('they gave their lives for the Rus land....' 'the heathens ... came victorious to the Rus land,' 'anguish spread throughout the Rus land,' etc., etc.)."

These facts prove that in the 10th-12th centuries "Rus land" was identical with "Rus state." Since the ancient authors applied the term "land" in equal measure to Byzantium, and Poland, and Hungary, and Bulgaria, and Rus, we are justified in assuming that they had a reason to do so. All the bodies politic here listed had something in common, in the opinion of the ancient authors. I believe that something to have been their statehood: all were states.

The fact that treaties guaranteed by state sanctions on both sides were concluded to establish trade and political ties, indicates the existence on both sides of classes concerned with trade and with relations between the two states. It also argues the existence of a state apparatus capable of ensuring the fulfilment of such treaties.

Igor's treaty clearly specifies the social forces mostly concerned in the establishment of trade ties with Byzantium. "And the Rus Grand Prince and his boyars," we read, "shall send to the great Greek kings ships, as many as they wish, with envoys and merchants." We shall not be far from the truth if we infer that it was the prince and his boyars who were in control of the situation and who were responsible for the trade between Rus and Byzantium. They were the rich and influential people, who, as we have seen, were big landowners and had their own men-at-arms. The merchants in this case played a secondary role. Together with their envoys, the boyars placed them aboard ships bound for Byzantium. We are here of course dealing only with Rus's trade with Byzantium. This does not exhaust the merchants' or the boyars' role in Kiev Rus's social life.

Both states, naturally, were not at the same level in their development. We should not equate 10th-century Byzantium and Rus. It is obvious also that these states were not immutable. The Rus of Oleg or Igor is not the Rus of Vladimir or Yaroslav. That is correct. My critics reproach me for discovering a "territorial and political entity" in the 10th century (Rubinstein) or even "a large, well-organized feudal state" (Bakhrushin).<sup>1</sup> An entity of some sort unquestionably existed. On this I insist, but I have never claimed and do not claim it to have been a "well"-organized state, that is, a centralized state.

I fully realize that words are quite insufficient and

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<sup>1</sup> It is true that Bakhrushin very cautiously says that one "gets the impression of a large, well-organized feudal state." (*Istoriik-Marxist*, No. 3, 1937, p. 167.)



that proof is needed, while the sources are much too scanty. No wonder this question was and remains controversial.

One cannot help recalling Presnyakov's statement on the condition of the sources pertaining to Oleg's and Igor's rule. "It is only from despair . . . at the inconsistency (of the sources—*Author*) that one can agree with Shakhmatov in completely severing all ties between Oleg and Igor. It is rather under the influence of the 'Jewish document' that one may be tempted by the penetrating surmise of the chronicler who gives us the story we find in the *First Novgorod (Annals.—Author)*."<sup>1</sup>

Mavrodin's paper, published in 1945, unreservedly describes Ancient Rus as an early feudal state, the largest in mediaeval Europe.<sup>2</sup>

I shall return to Shakhmatov's and Presnyakov's considerations regarding the "Jewish document." For the present I set myself a very modest task, namely, to show the state of the controversy on the political system in Kiev Rus. I merely wish to make a few remarks on the opinions of those who are either not inclined to recognize Kiev Rus as a state and a stage in our history, or recognize it as a state with so many reservations that their recognition is in itself tantamount to non-recognition.

I shall examine this question in the next chapter devoted to the status of princely power in the state of Ancient Rus. I intend to use mainly the treaties with the Greeks and certain other sources, resorting to the chronicler's story only rarely. I am going to do so deliberately, for I do not wish to be accused of having adopted the view of our first historian who is, it is true, not free from bias in describing the activities of the Ancient Rus princes.

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Part I, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> B. B. Мавродин, *Образование древнерусского государства*, Л. 1945. (V. V. Mavrodin, *The Formation of the Ancient Rus State*, Leningrad, 1945.)

In dealing with the status of the prince and changes in that status, I shall try to trace the evolution of the superstructural phenomena in connection with changes in the basis, i.e., in the economic system of society at every stage of its development.

## 2. THE PRINCE AND THE KIEV NOBILITY

All Russian scholars were concerned with the status of the princes in the "Kiev period" of our history. It is not surprising, therefore, that we have copious opinions on this score. But it is scarcely necessary to cite all of them here. I think it will serve our purpose to adduce only the opinions of those who set out a comprehensive conception of the entire development of our country.

The advocates of the "tribal theory" based their conceptions on princely power in the "Kiev period" on the assumption that it was vested in the entire "ruling dynasty," viewing the entire Rus land as "family property" and its prince as a representative of the princely line. The "Ryurikovichy family," alien or invited, became, in Solovyov's opinion, a necessity, when it was realized that a common weal was unattainable under tribal internecine wars: "A foreign ruler was required to establish contact between them and to make possible their co-existence; it was the experience of the tribes that peace was possible only when everyone lived in a single tribe with a single head. And we find them desirous of re-establishing this erstwhile unity ... this could be made possible only with a prince not belonging to any tribe, but coming from a foreign tribe." "The prince was to rule and possess ... he organized the land system, the armed forces, the land statutes; he was a leader in war and a judge in peace; he punished criminals; his court was his court of justice, and his servants the executives of his judgements; every new statute emanated from him ...



the prince collected tribute and disposed it." This tribute was collected either by the prince himself with his men-at-arms, or delivered to him by his subject tribes ("to carry *povoz*"). The prince led the army organized from among his dependent tribes and peoples. This is what was meant by the expression "the *naryadnik* of the land."<sup>1</sup>

The opponents of the "tribal system" school have a different conception of the prince. It was dealt a telling blow by Sergeyevich's book *Veche and Prince* published in the sixties of the last century. The author's basic views are set out in the introduction. "Russia's ancient history falls into two periods, which differ in time and in the nature of their institutions. In the former, princely period, Russia appears to be divided into numerous principalities, independent of each other. In the second, tsar period, it is integrated into a single state with its political centre at Moscow."<sup>2</sup> It appears, therefore, that Sergeyevich does not recognize a special period in the history of Russia preceding the period of fragmentation (*udels*). Sergeyevich did not change his views later. In his *Russian Juridical Antiquities* published in the early 20th century, he made a very clear statement on the subject. "Our ancient princes lived in a highly intricate milieu. They had certain relationships with the people, with other ruling princes and, finally, with their free servants." The prince's relationship with the people, Sergeyevich believes, was expressed in his relations with the *veche*, which summoned him, concluded an agreement with him, and "showed him the way out" when it was dissatisfied with him. The relations between the princes were determined by treaties between "the rulers of *volosts* which were independent of each other."<sup>3</sup> Sergeyevich apparently ignores the fact that the *veche* does not function in the

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, op. cit., Book 1, pp. 213-18.

<sup>2</sup> В. И. Сергеевич, Вече и князь, М. 1867, стр. 1. (V. I. Sergeyevich, *Veche and Prince*, Moscow, 1867, p. 1.)

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 119.

9th and 10th centuries and the first half of the 11th century, with the sole exception of Novgorod, where the first *veche* is mentioned in 1016. The people neither elected nor removed the princes, and there were as yet no independent *volosts* while the princes did not conclude any treaties with each other. His observations hold water only for the "*udel* period" (feudal fragmentation). The prince of the "Kiev period," whom Sergeyevich tried to squeeze into the framework of the *udel* (appanage) system, remained, for all practical purposes, unconsidered.

Dyakonov follows a similar line of reasoning. "Princely rule is as much an indigenous and general institution as the *veche*. The rule of the princes is mentioned among some Slav tribes long before the advent of the Rurikovichy. This rule has its roots deep in the prehistorical patriarchal system. . . ." The author then deals with the separate *volosts* as principalities. "The prince is a necessary component of state power in all Russian lands." "As an element of state power, the prince of every principality occupied a position substantially different from that of the *veche*, for he was an organ which functioned constantly and daily."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimirsky-Budanov's opinion is very similar. "The origin of princely power is prehistoric . . . the power is not vested in an individual, but in an *entire family*. . . . The members of the princely family *govern in common without any division of power*" or "*divide the power among themselves territorially*. . . . This order began to predominate at the end of the 10th century and resulted in the so-called *udel* system."<sup>2</sup> He, too, fails to examine princely rule in its historical development. Nor does he distinguish between the period of the Ancient Rus state and the succeeding appanage period.

Kluchevsky's attitude to this issue is rather original.

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, pp. 146, 148.

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, pp. 37, 38. (Author's italics.—B. D. Grekov.)



He says that the "urban regions" were replaced by the "Varangian principality" and later by the "Kiev state," with the Kiev prince and his men-at-arms at its head. This attempt to unite the Russian land, Kluchevsky believes, was the result of the same impulse which previously led to the creation of urban regions, independent of each other. That impulse, he believes, was Russian foreign trade.

The Kiev principality, like the trade regions before it, were of social rather than national origin. It was set up by no tribe, but by a class which emerged from among the various tribes. The military and trade aristocracy which governed the trade regions lent support to the strongest of the *konungs* and helped him to consolidate his position in Kiev. The same aristocracy helped the Kiev princes to extend their rule. "The military and trade aristocracy of the major cities was the most potent force in the creation of Rus's political unity, which emerged when that class began to congregate under the banner of the Kiev prince who came from among it." "While the new government, the prince and his men-at-arms, were still insecure and needed the assistance of the urban nobility from which they came, both social forces remained close to each other. Their actions are co-ordinated throughout the entire 10th century ... they fight and trade together, together they debate the major legislative issues in the prince's *duma*." By the middle of the 11th century a "mutual alienation" between the princely government and the urban nobility becomes evident. The appearance of privileged landholdings among the prince's men-at-arms ("boyars"), Kluchevsky believes, "which became evident in the 11th century, tended to alienate still more that class of urban society which held trade capital." But even after Yaroslav, when the princes, "with the exception of Monomakh, became steppe horsemen who defended the Russian land from the heathens, they remained by and large true to the customs and ideas of their pagan ancestors of the 9th and 10th centuries, the seafaring Vikings on Russian

rivers. . . . The two centuries of his activities went to create in the Russian prince a type which originated at its very inception: he was the military guardian of the land, its trade routes and caravans, who got his keep for that service. When the princes multiplied they began to share their defensive duties and their incomes, dividing and re-allocating their regions by right of seniority. This exchange of possessions made the prince a vagabond guest in the region, the itinerant *vityaz* he was two centuries ago. It was then that the leading cities remained the only permanent and habitual leaders of their regions . . . the local *mirs*, concentrated around Kiev, with the aid of the 10th-century princes, began to gravitate once again to their local centres."<sup>1</sup>

It becomes clear that Kluchevsky distinguishes the period of the state of Ancient Rus and describes it. But his explanation is unacceptable. I object to his contention that "Russian foreign trade" was the main driving force behind this process. I disagree, too, with his interpretation of the princely boyars and the urban nobility, in whose status Kluchevsky notes two periods; the first up to the 11th century, when there was a community of trading interests between the prince, his men-at-arms and the urban nobility, and the second, from the 11th century on, when the boyars became privileged landowners and the urban nobility continued to derive its strength from its trading capital. The author's tense descriptions of the prince and his metamorphosis as "a horseman and seafaring Viking," the "military defender of trade routes" and a "vagabond guest in the region," and "itinerant *vityaz*," etc., are equally unconvincing.

In 1909, Presnyakov published a critique of Kluchevsky's trade theory and presented his own view of Kiev Rus's political system. He too singled out the "pre-Yaroslav period" in which the Ancient Rus state retained its unity due to the concentration of power in the hands of the prince

<sup>1</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *The Boyar Duma of Ancient Rus*, pp. 37 and 46.



who held Kiev. The author is inclined to overestimate the importance of the prince. He holds that the thousands and the millenaries, the hundreds and the centurions and the decurions are part of the administration set up by the prince, who is the organizer of society in the full sense of the word. Presnyakov's *Lectures* set out his views with greater clarity: "The prince is not only a military commander, the protector of the land from the external foe, it is also he who establishes the *naryad* (order) and his role becomes increasingly important with the appearance of phenomena transcending the bounds of popular existence based on age-long custom and duty."<sup>1</sup> But Presnyakov's attention is centred on 11th and 12th century Rus, the period of feudal fragmentation. He makes only a cursory analysis of princely power in the state of Ancient Rus.

Grushevsky artificially divorced the history of the Ukraine from the history of the Russian people, ignoring the fact that the state of Ancient Rus was a period in the history of the entire Russian people and indeed of other peoples. He dwells on the history of princely power in the state of Ancient Rus.

He holds that the tribal princes did not play any conspicuous role. Only the Kiev princes became prominent. They gathered the "Ukrainian" lands around Kiev. This process of concentration was very difficult. The Kiev state was unstable. Its unity demanded constant refurbishing. "It was only the head of the state—the Kiev prince—who could show initiative and muster the substantial forces required. It was he who organized the frontier watch, raised regiments from among the subject tribes, got rid of the Varangian *condottiere* and so forth. . . . A successful campaign brought in much booty of which the lion's share went to the Kiev prince, but, as may be seen from an insertion in the *Chronicle* for 907, the men-at-arms, who were mobilized not only for campaigns, but also to man the frontier posts,

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Princely Right in Ancient Rus*, pp. 47, 196 et al. Also his *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I, p. 183 et al.

were not left out either. The campaigns, which crowned the organization of the men-at-arms in that period, served to incorporate these warriors into a single body sprawling over the land—an expression of the unity of the state. In this lay their very great importance.”<sup>1</sup>

The author's biased assertion that the state of Ancient Rus was “Ukrainian” made it impossible for him to understand its history.

The period of the “Kiev state” is one of the most important factors in the history of our peoples and, above all, of the Russian people, which later trifurcated into the Great Russians, the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians. This fact should be clearly brought home before the subsequent history of these peoples can be understood. That is why it requires the most painstaking study.

I most definitely do not agree with those modern scholars who tend to underestimate the significance of this vital period.

I shall now examine the status and role of the prince in the state of Ancient Rus.

It is Jordanes and the Byzantine historians who supply us with the earliest data on the ruling power among the Eastern Slavs. Jordanes (d. 552) describes the military clashes between the Antes and the Goths in the 4th century, and mentions the name of Bozh, a king (rex) of the Antes, who was taken prisoner by the Goths. He was crucified with his sons and 70 “elders” (primates). This same Bozh had previously inflicted defeats on the Goths and was, consequently, the leader of a considerable force. It was a military alliance of tribes under a single leadership. Naturally, we should not attach any special importance to the title rex, as Jordanes calls Bozh.

Mauricius Strategicus (late 6th century) says that the Slavs and the Antes have many chieftains ( ῥηγες ) and advises the Byzantine government to take them into account, win over by gifts and promises those who are near-

<sup>1</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 428.



est to the Byzantine frontiers, in order with their aid to defeat the other Slav and Ante chieftains. He also warns of the potential threat to Byzantium arising from a unification of the Slavs and the Antes.

Precopius of Caesarea (d. 562) emphasizes that the Slavs and the Antes are not ruled by a single authority (like the Byzantines) but solve vital problems at popular congresses.

Menander, a Byzantine historian of the 6th century, mentions Mezamir, a noble and powerful Ante, who was feared by the Avars because he had great prestige among his people. Theophylactus, another Byzantine historian of the first half of the 7th century, is also aware of the existence of Slav chieftains, and names an entire territory "the land of Ardagast," after one of them. He also mentions other chiefs.

This indirect evidence leads us to conclude that in the 6th century A. D. the Antes, i.e., the Eastern Slavs, had already emerged from the tribal system and we find them to be a tribal alliance, a "military democracy."

The subsequent development of tribal alliances may be described as follows.

The chieftains and their men-at-arms become the most eminent representatives of state power. These representatives, whether kings or princes (the name is immaterial), transformed from tribal chieftains into the bearers of royal power, turn the national wealth—the land—into their personal property and help their men-at-arms to assimilate it. The big landowners who appeared during the disintegration of the tribe and the community support their kings or princes, join the ranks of their men-at-arms and in this manner consolidate their social and political status. The old tribal governing bodies disappear, having become useless as a result of the growth of the state. The council of elders is replaced by consultations with the new nobility, while the popular congress withers away.

Only a class of big landowners could have become the dominant class, it was being gradually built up parallel to

the growth of proprietary inequality in a society where agriculture was the main branch of production. This is what the princes and the nobles of their retinue became.

It should be borne in mind that we are now considering a superstructure created by a definite economic system of society, i.e., by the state of its productive forces and relations of production at that period. We should also bear in mind that the relations of production lag behind the productive forces in their development, being a consequence of the latter. The great active force of the superstructure, which helps its basis to take shape and mature, should not be ignored either.

I fully appreciate that this is merely a sociological abstract and not an answer to the problem of Ancient Rus' political system. I pass, therefore, from theory to an examination of the factual material which has been preserved.

Our scholars are fully justified in doubting the accuracy of the chroniclers' accounts, particularly in the 9th and 10th centuries. They approach the facts of that period recorded in the chronicles with understandable circumspection. The treaties with the Greeks, on the other hand, are increasingly viewed as documents of exceptional value and as the most objective sources. Today, no one is likely to question that these treaties were indeed concluded between the two states and that they reflect those aspects of Russo-Byzantine relations which were then vital to both parties.

We may safely declare that the treaties were written in Greek and simultaneously translated into the Russian. The 911 Treaty was translated by a Bulgarian into his native language and edited by a Rus; the 944 Treaty was translated by a Rus scribe who left a mixture of Russian and Bulgarian elements in his translation.<sup>1</sup>

Our scholars have long since realized the value of this source. Schlözer, who did not recognize the authenticity of the treaties, was nevertheless enthusiastic about them. "This treaty," he wrote, "if authentic, is one of the land-

<sup>1</sup> S. P. Obnorsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-03.



marks of the Middle Ages. It is something entirely unique in the historical sphere."

It also appears incontrovertible that the texts of the treaty were preserved in the princely archives at Kiev as an important state document. The compiler of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* who worked not only with the prince's knowledge, but apparently on his orders, was allowed the access to his archives and had an opportunity of using this most valuable source which unquestionably helped him to find his way through the most important events of the 10th century. On several occasions the author of the *Chronicle* commented on the text of the treaties. It is hard to say whether he made his notes on the strength of the treaty texts, or used other sources, but one thing is clear, and it is that there is co-ordination between the treaty texts and the chronicler's comments.

Following his story of the 907 campaign against Constantinople and the conclusion of a treaty, the chronicler comments on the text of the treaty: "And Oleg established that the warriors be given 12 *grivnas* per rudder in 2,000 ships, and that the established payment be made to the Rus cities; firstly, to Kiev, then Chernigov, Pereyaslavl, Polotsk, Rostov, Lubech and other cities, in which princes under Oleg sat."<sup>1</sup> This is followed by the text of the treaty which says: "...And they (the Russians arriving in Constantinople—*Author*) shall then take their monthly keep—the first from Kiev, the second from Chernigov and from Pereyaslavl."<sup>2</sup>

The 944 Treaty repeats the phrase: "...And they shall then take their monthly keep, the envoys their allowance, and the merchants their monthly keep, the first from Kiev, the second from Chernigov and from Pereyaslavl."<sup>3</sup>

Some versions of the text contain additions saying: "and other cities," or "and from other cities."

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Vol. I, p. 31; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32, and p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54, and 36.

It is quite possible that it was the chronicler who added Polotsk, Rostov and Lubech to this list. It is also very possible that it was not the author of the *Chronicle* who made this insertion, but his continuator, the compiler. But the point is not who made it, but whether there was good reason to do so. The inclusion of Polotsk raises certain doubts, because that city was apparently added to the possessions of the Kiev prince only under Vladimir I in 980, that is, according to the *Laurenty Annals*.

It is no accident that Kiev heads the list. Constantine Porphyrogenitus also referred to Kiev as an economic and political centre. In his *De administrando imperio* he wrote: "The log boats arriving in Constantinople from outlying Rus (ῥῆξιω 'Ρωσῖα) come from Newogarda (Novgorod), ruled by Svyatoslav, the son of the Russian Prince Igor, as well as from the fortress of Miliniska (Smolensk), from Telyutsa (apparently Lubech), Chernigoga (Chernigov) and from Vyshegrad. All of them go down the Dnieper and gather at the Kiev fortress, called the Samvata."<sup>1</sup> In his interpretation of Canon 62 of the Trul Congress Fyodor Valsamon, a Greek canonist of the 12th century, who wrote in about 1100, mentions the *rusalias*, Slav spring festivities, "as being a festival celebrated according to a bad custom in the outlying lands."<sup>2</sup>

Outlying Rus, I believe, is a reference to the Rus lands beyond the Kiev territory, as distinct from Kiev Rus in the narrow sense of the word.<sup>3</sup> In any case, Constantine Porphyrogenitus considers both outlying and inner Rus to be Rus—an important point. Jaihani, an Arab writer of the late 9th and early 10th century, as well as West-European sources, say that Rus is a country dependent on Kiev<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> S. Gedeonov, *The Varangians and Rus*, Part 2, p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Shakhmatov regards this land as being dependent on and subject to Rus. Thomsen regards it as lying beyond Kiev; P.P. Smirnov as the land around the Volga; M.S. Grushevsky—as "provincial Rus" and N. I. Khlebnikov—"on the other side."

<sup>4</sup> I think that Priselkov errs in asserting that the chronicles call only



Constantine also describes Kiev as the centre of the country.

Kiev's central position is stressed by Constantine's report that it was the assembly point for ships from all parts of Rus, and that it was there that the Grand Prince Igor had his seat. The latter, incidentally, sent his son to Novgorod as vice-gerent and representative of the Grand Prince.

This latter fact is connected with the chronicler's comments on the text of the treaty in question. After giving a list of the cities, he observes: "For princes who are under Oleg sit in them." Svyatoslav Igorevich who sat in Novgorod was undoubtedly also "under" Igor, but it is improbable that the chronicler meant the kinsmen of the Kiev prince when he spoke of the "princes," if only because there were few of them at the time, whereas the chronicler mentions many.

All the treaties repeatedly refer to the princes subject to and dependent on Oleg. After listing the envoys sent by Oleg to Byzantium to conclude a treaty, the 911 Treaty says: "... Who are sent from Oleg, the Rus Grand Prince, and from those who are under him, the eminent and grand princes and great boyars." The treaty makes repeated mention of this in similar terms: The treaty is "signed at the wish of our Grand Prince and upon orders from all those who are under him in Rus"; "We shall love each other (the Byzantines and Rus) with all our souls and of our free will, and we shall not permit, to the best of our abilities, that

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the Kiev territory Rus. There is much evidence in support of the contrary: the entire Rus land—and not Kiev alone—is constantly contrasted with the Greek land. Yaropolk Svyatoslavich could consider himself the prince of all Rus only after he established his vice-gerent in Novgorod. ("Yaropolk sent his *posadnik* to Novgorod and became the ruler of all Rus.") The Novgorod toponymy is also highly indicative. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus Rus includes Novgorod, Lubech, Smolensk, Chernigov, etc. But the Kiev region was in effect the Rus *par excellence*, its centre. He used the name ἡ ἔσθω Ρωσία for the more remote parts of Rus. (M. D. Priselkov, op. cit.) See N. N. Petrovsky's comprehensive article entitled *Kiev Rus as the Initial Period in the History of the Russian the Ukrainian and the Byelorussian Peoples* (Pratsi sichnevoi sesii akademii nauk U.S.S.R., 1942.)

any temptation or harm should arise from the eminent princes under us"; "And you, Greeks, shall also preserve that friendship with our eminent Rus prince and with all those who are under him...."

These same "princes," who are dependent on the Kiev prince, Igor, are also mentioned in the 944 Treaty. The envoys and merchants were sent to Byzantium "on behalf of Igor, the Rus Grand Prince, and on behalf of all the princes and all the people of the Russian land." Or: "And Igor, our Grand Prince, and his princes and boyars, and all the Russian people sent us to Roman, and to Constantine and to Stephen, to the Great Greek Kings, to establish friendship with the kings themselves, with all the boyars and with all the Greek people, for all times, while the sun shines and the world stands."

The treaty then mentions Igor's boyars: "And the Rus Grand Prince and his boyars shall send to the Greeks, to the Great Greek Kings, their ships, as many as they wish, with envoys and merchants...."

The bilateral oath on the treaty was a guarantee of its fulfilment. The Rus delegation swore that "what is written in this charter shall be adhered to by Igor, and all the boyars, and all the people and land of Rus in future years and wars.

"And if anyone of the princes or of the Rus people, whether Christian or non-Christian, violates what is written in this charter, he will deserve death by his own weapons...."<sup>1</sup>

We find similar statements in Prince Svyatoslav's Treaty of 972. In concluding a treaty, Prince Svyatoslav speaks on his own behalf and on behalf of those under him: "The Rus, boyars and others under me." He does not take the oath alone: "... I swore to the Greek kings and with me the boyars and all Rus.... If we do not stand by the above, I and those with me and under me shall be cursed by the god in whom we believe, by Peroun and Volos, the cattle god...." It is noteworthy that in Svyatoslav's treaty it is

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, pp. 33, 34, 35, 59-60; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 26, 35, 38-39.



not the princes, but only the boyars, who are listed.

Solovyov observes that "it is only the members of the ruling families and never common men who are called princes." But he goes on to make a statement which he does not substantiate: he says that the princes mentioned by the treaties are the kinsmen of the Kiev prince. It is true that he adds: "We know nothing of the relationship between the Kiev princes and these kinsmen."<sup>1</sup> The quest for kinsmen led this great historian astray and prevented him from seeing the facts.

I believe it is more correct to regard these princes, with their florid Byzantine titles, as local princes who were being systematically subjugated and often destroyed by the Kiev princes. When the chronicle was being written the names of many were forgotten. Others were ignored by the chronicler, who was entrusted with the task of depicting in as favourable a light as possible the history of the princes of the "Pyurik dynasty," which was unquestionably hostile to all other princely lines. We know how mercilessly the Kiev princes dealt with insubordinate local princes.

There are absolutely no inter-princely relationships here at all. Even Solovyov himself, the more persistent advocate of the theory of "tribal" inter-princely relationships, had to make considerable reservations, to the effect that "these relations (i.e., the relationships between the Kiev princes and the other non-Kiev princes—*Author*) were not like subsequent family relations between princes, because Rurik's kinsmen (!) were called his *muzhi*, a fact which speaks of relationships of service and not of consanguinity."<sup>2</sup>

If we consider these "kinsmen" of Rurik, allegedly called "*muzhi*," as an unsubstantiated invention, which is of no use even to the author himself, we arrive at a description of the political system of the state of Ancient Rus in the 10th century which will be in the main correct if not

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Relations Between the Princes of the House of Rurik*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

entirely complete. It transpires that the local "*muzhi*" were in the service of the Kiev prince. As we shall presently see, neither the "*muzhi*" nor the princes were in any way related to Rurik.

Igor's Treaty of 944 furnishes us with interesting details which give us a deeper insight into contemporary political relations.

It not only tells us of Igor's sending "his *muzhi* to Roman," and that the emissaries who came to the Byzantine court were "sent by Igor, the Rus Grand Prince, and all the other princes and all the people of the Russian land." It also lists these representatives, "envoys" and "merchants." This should give us food for thought.

It is the envoys who are of particular interest. One is struck by their eminent station in society: they are mentioned first in the treaty, they have their own golden seals and enjoy privileges in Constantinople itself as their country's representatives. But that is not all. We are plainly told whom they represent, for they did not travel to Constantinople of their own accord. Igor was the envoy of Igor, the Rus Grand Prince himself. He heads the list and is singled out from among the others. He is not placed on the same level as the other "common envoys." In the order mentioned in the treaty, the latter include: Vuestast—the envoy of Svyatoslav, Igor's son; then comes the envoy representing Igor's wife, the Princess Olga, and Igor, Igor's nephew. A representative of Yakun, Igor's other nephew, is mentioned next. It is noteworthy that even the envoys of Igor's wife and his son are listed as "common envoys." This is done to underscore the special status of the Kiev Grand Prince, a fact corroborated by other sources at our disposal. Next on the list are the prince's *muzhi*—the boyars and noble women who had their representatives in this embassy—Predslava and Sfandra, the wife of Uleb. Altogether 20 *muzhi* are listed. They are followed by the merchants, who number 30. Who are these *muzhi*? First of all, we should emphasize their station under the



prince and their role as representatives of the Kiev princely government. They are all nobles, the eminent princes and boyars so often mentioned in the treaties. They are those of whom Svyatoslav said in his 972 Treaty: "Those who are *with me*," in contrast to those who were "*under*" him. They do not travel to Byzantium themselves, but send representatives, selected from their courts. The status of those representatives is similar to that of Olga's and Svyatoslav's men.

Princess Olga's visit to Constantinople and her reception at the court of the Byzantine Emperor, described by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, prove that the sending of representatives by the princes and boyars to conclude the 944 Treaty was no isolated incident, but a well-established practice. Olga arrived with her nephew, eight of her courtiers, representatives of Prince Svyatoslav, representatives ("apocrisarii") of the Russian notables—οἱ ἀποκριτάριοι τῶν ἀρχόντων (20 or 22 persons) and merchants (43 or 44 persons). The representatives—apocrisarii—of the Russian ruling nobility have their own retinues. This indicates that they were people of some standing, but those they represented were much more important. This arrangement is similar to that recorded in the 944 Treaty. In the latter, it was Igor who was singled out; in this case it is Olga. In Greek documents she is called *hegemon* and *archontissa* of the Rus, as the noblest and most eminent of foreign *hegemons* were called by the Greeks.<sup>1</sup> She is also singled out by the gifts she received. She was given 700 milisiaria and a golden salver decorated with precious stones, while her nephew, whose present was second in value only to his aunt's received 50 milisiaria; the "apocrisarii" of the Russian nobles received 24 milisiaria and the merchants 20 milisiaria each.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, Issue 91, p. 71, Note 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, Issue 91, pp. 47-48.

Russian folk-lore has well preserved this aspect of Kiev Rus's political system:

*"Hail thou, Ivan Godinovich!  
Have a hundred men from me, the prince,  
Mighty Russian bogatyrs,  
And another hundred from the princess."*<sup>1</sup>

It becomes clear why Princess Olga has her own castle at Vyshgorod, her own manor called Olzhichi ("and her manor Olzhichi stands to this day") and Rogneda the bailey at Lybed, and later the *gorod* of Izyaslavl. It becomes clear, too, why the tribute from the Drevlyane was divided so that two parts went to Kiev and the third "to Vyshegorod." The chronicler explains it as follows: "For Vyshegorod was Olga's *gorod*." These reports in the chronicles are scattered fragments of the old life, taken, as it were, out of context. But they, too, together with other data, support the contention that the princes and boyars had their own baileys, lands and economies, at least in the 9th and 10th centuries, and that landownership was no novelty in Rus in the 10th century.

In this light the chronicle's famous account of Princess Olga's tour of the Drevlyane and Novgorod lands stands out in bold relief.

After the war with the Drevlyane, Olga imposed an extra tribute above that exacted by her predecessors ("and she imposed a heavy tribute on them"). She also decided to consolidate her position in the Drevlyane land, not being satisfied with the ties which were usually established by the conqueror through the imposition of tribute. "Olga and her son travelled through the Drevlyane land with their men-at-arms and set up administrations and determined rates; and to this day one can see the places where

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<sup>1</sup> *Кириша Данилова, Древние русские стихотворения*, М. 1938, p. 138 (Kirsha Danilov, *Ancient Russian Poems*, Moscow, 1938, p. 138); S. M. Solovyov, *Russian History from Earliest Times*, Book 1, p. 219.



she camped and hunted." During the next year (947) she applied the same administrative and political measures to a part of the Novgorod lands: "And she set up *pogosts* and tribute along the river Msta and quitrent and tribute along the Luga; and her hunting-grounds are evident throughout the country: her metes and bounds, encampments and *pogosts*; and her sleigh is to be seen in Pskov to this day; and her fowling devices are along the Dnieper and the Desna; and her manor Olzhichi stands to this day." (*Laurenty Annals*.)

This report in the *First Novgorod Annals*, particularly that part of it which deals with the Novgorod land, is much more indicative: "Olga went to Novgorod, and established *pogosts* and tribute along the Msta, and her hunting-grounds are throughout the land, and the metes and bounds, and encampments and *pogosts* are also throughout the land; and her sleigh is in Pskov to this day; and her fowling devices and manors are along the Dnieper, and her manor stands on the Desna to this day." Here is the *Ipaty Annals* version: "And Olga went to Novgorod and set up *pogosts* and tribute along the River Msta, and *pogosts* and tribute and quitrent along the Luga; and her hunting-grounds are throughout the land, and her metes and bounds, and encampments, and *pogosts* (and her sleigh is in Pskov to this day), and fowling devices along the Dnieper and along the Desna, and her manor Olzhichi stands to this day."

What then was Olga doing in the Drevlyane and Novgorod lands? I think that she was trying to establish herself in that society and to set up special economic and administrative centres at various points in the Drevlyane and Novgorod lands. These were administered by her men who were simultaneously entrusted with the political task of consolidating the rule of the Kiev prince in the localities.

A closer examination of this account in the chronicle is needed. The chronicler tells us of two facts: the first relates to the past, and concerns Olga's direct activities, and

the second relates to the contemporary state of things which survived until the writing of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, i.e., the end of the 11th century. The first is described by the chronicler as follows: "And Olga went ... and set up administrations and determined rates." In the *First Novgorod Annals*: "And she set up *pogosts* and tribute along the Msta, and quitrent and tribute along the Luga." What was the result of this? In the Drevlyane land "her encampments and hunting-grounds are throughout the land," and in Novgorod: "Her hunting-grounds are throughout the land, her metes and bounds and *pogosts*, and her sleigh is in Pskov to this day, and fowling devices, along the Dnieper and along the Desna, and her manor Olzhichi stands to this day." The chronicler even thought it necessary to extend somewhat the scope of the Kiev prince's activities (very possibly not those of Olga herself) and to include the Dnieper and the Desna (where Olzhichi stood), for good measure also attributing some of the activities of the other princes to him.

What has the sleigh to do with all this? I think that the sleigh is material evidence (an object of material culture) proving that Olga did actually travel through the Novgorod land. This sleigh was preserved in Pskov in the same way as Peter's boat is preserved in Leningrad, and the barge of Catherine II in Novgorod, etc. Olga travelled in that sleigh. This was a fact which the chronicler well knew or firmly believed to be true. He made use of it for his own purposes. Other traces of Olga's activities throughout the Novgorod land were the hunting-grounds, the metes and bounds, the encampments and the *pogosts*, and in the Drevlyane land, encampments and hunting-grounds along the Dnieper and the Desna, and fowling devices and manors along the Dnieper and the Desna.

The chronicler is aware that he is reporting on the past but he thinks it necessary to connect it with the present. He therefore adduces other proof in conclusion: "And her manor Olzhichi stands to this day." But it would



appear that Olga did not establish any manors! At all events, the chronicler said nothing about it before. That is why we should have a closer look at Olga's activities in the area. Let us start with the simplest facts—the *pogosts* (*povosts* in the original). Of course, Olga did not establish them; they were already there when she came. But that is not the point. The chronicler has something else in mind. He wished to convey the idea that Olga took a part of the *pogosts* under her jurisdiction. The *pogosts* included manors. To prove this the chronicler points to their existence in his own time. He could not have given more conclusive proof, which was scarcely required.

But apart from the *pogosts*, and the manor which they included, Olga also took over some "places." What are these places? I think that Sreznevsky answers this question. "We repeatedly come across the word 'place' (*myesto*) in our ancient accounts," he says, "used to describe a special settlement. Thus, the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* (p. 68) says: 'Yaroslav built churches in the *gorods* and the *places*.' The *Laurenty Annals* (p. 118): 'There are scarcely any *places*, or *villages*, or manors, which (the Tatars) did not seize.' And the *Ipaty Annals* for 1290 say: 'He arrived at a *place*, for it was not possible to enter the *gorod*....' (Sreznevsky's italics—*Author*.)<sup>1</sup>

The gist of the chronicler's account is that the Kiev prince assimilated the outlying inhabited and uninhabited lands.

Another part of the text is also noteworthy: Olga travels through the Drevlyane land "setting up administrations and determining rates." This she also does along the Msta and the Luga. It would appear that her activities consisted mainly in determining the obligations of the population to the Kiev prince, and, also seemingly, to the local nobility, while the princely places, *pogosts*

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<sup>1</sup> I. I. Sreznevsky, *Lectures on Ancient Russian Chronicles* (*Zapiski Akademii Nauk*, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, Addenda No. 4, p. 35).

and manors served to exact them. We may recall the *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*, with its picture of the princely demesne, to which the *ognishchanin*, the *podyezdnoi* and the *virnik* do not confine their activities.

The setting up of administrations and rates is often mentioned in *Russkaya Pravda*: "The *Pravda* of the Russian land was established (*ustavlena*)."<sup>1</sup> "The rates for the *smerds* who pay *prodazha* to the prince" are also well known. There are cattle, bridge, iron and other rates, including urban rates and dues on oaths.

It would be relevant here to cite a similar fact from the time of Yaroslav the Lawgiver. It appears that his policy towards the Rostov and Suzdal land was similar to that of his ancestors in the land of the Drevlyane and the Msta and Luga basins. The *Fourth Novgorod Annals* note that Yaroslav travelled to the Rostov and Suzdal land in 1024 and "set up an administration in that land." *Ustavlyati* means to establish law and introduce standards defined by law. This was the way in which the Kiev princes performed their functions of internal government.

Such a view of Olga's activities determines our approach to other documents and above all to the 1137 *Statutes* of the Novgorod prince, Svyatoslav Olegovich, which have so far been little studied. Their text and title reveal that the St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod had been financed by the princely court since its establishment,<sup>1</sup> and that Svyatoslav Olegovich found the maintenance of the princely cathedral well organized. Returning from the south, he wrote in his *Statutes*: "And here, in Novgorod, I found everything organized by my princely predecessors as regards the tithe of the tributes." What he found apparently did not please him and he decided to effect changes: instead of an unspecified and apparently

<sup>1</sup> "The *Statutes* set up before us in Rus by our great-grandfathers and grandfathers, which say that the bishops are to have a tithe of the tributes and of the *wergild* and the *prodazhas* collected by the princely court." (M. F. Vladimírsky-Budanov, *A Reader on the History of Russian Law*, Issue 1, p. 255.)



too large sum which accrued from the princely wergild and *prodazhas* collected by his court, he decided to set aside for St. Sophia's a definite sum of 100 *grivnas* of new *kunas* of income derived from the Onega lands administered by his vice-gerent ("the *domazhirich* from Onega").<sup>1</sup> He promised to pay 20 *kunas* from his own treasury when the Onega "*domazhirich*" was short of funds. Then follows a list of the *pogosts* and places in various parts of the Novgorod land which the prince decided were to send St. Sophia a tithe of their tribute: "Voldutov *Pogost* in Onega is to pay 2 *sorochkas*,<sup>2</sup> Tudorov *Pogost*—2 *sorochkas*, Ivan *Pogost*—3 *sorochkas* with an additional donation," etc.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Domozhirets*, according to Sreznevsky, is a "domestic." "And the Lord aroused Ader, his domestic, against Solomon." (I.I. Sreznevsky, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Ancient Rus Language*.) He is not, I think, a common domestic, but a person of higher rank, a butler, an *ognishchannin*. This is confirmed by the 1137 *Statutes*.

<sup>2</sup> *Sorochka*—a furskin made of forty squirrel skins.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> Barsov has this to say about these *Statutes*: "It becomes clear from the 1137 *Statutes* that the territory colonized by the Novgorodites by that time extended only to Pinega in the north-east, and that its Slav population was very small and sparse. The *Statutes* listed only 26 localities where the Novgorodites had managed to entrench themselves by that time on the vast expanse between Lake Onega and the White Sea, Pinega, Vaga and Sukhona. It is clear, therefore, that the end of the 11th century should be viewed as a period of the initial consolidation of the Novgorod Slavs in the areas around the Onega and the Dvina."—*Н. П. Барсов, Очерки русской исторической географии, Варшава, 1885, стр. 202—203.* (N. P. Barsov, *Essays on Russian Historical Geography, Warsaw, 1885, pp. 202-03.*)

Thus, Barsov thinks that Svyatoslav's *Statutes* name all the localities occupied by the Novgorod Slavs. That is unlikely, because his own studies show that these are scattered throughout the Novgorod possessions: In the north along the Onega River, the Vaga, the Vytegra and south of Lake Onega. The possibility of places existing further south is not excluded (Barsov himself mentions the Tikhvin area), like Vytegra and Lake Lacha in the east. Colonization in such leaps and bounds is scarcely probable. There were undoubtedly other lands belonging to Novgorod between the Tikhvin and the Onega. But Barsov's weakest point is his recourse to "colonization" to interpret the *Statutes*. I think that they can be explained much more satisfactorily in another way. What we find is not colonization by the Slavs, but the assimilation of land, with its population, by the men-at-arms of the Novgorod nobility, who paid no heed to ethnic peculiarities. All these Voldutas, Tudors, Sfirks et al., may have come from some neighbouring land to a land rich in furs and other

Some of the geographical names are derivatives of personal names. I believe they are connected with persons who stood above the masses and may possibly have been their former owners. Their lands were later integrated in the possessions of the Novgorod prince, Svyatoslav, after Vsevolod's expulsion.

The following names are either those after which the Novgorod *pogosts* were named, or those which originated from territorial names: Volduta, Tudor, Ivan, Spirk, Vikhtui, Chudin, Ligui, Vavdit or Valdit, etc.

We cannot be absolutely sure that we have succeeded in distinguishing between the geographical names and the personal, but unquestionably these territorial names are mixed with the names of those who were in some way connected with the land.

It may be presumed that it was the "former princes" who "set up the administration" in the Novgorod land, i.e., their princely *pogosts* and manors, imposed "quitrent" and "tribute" and introduced "statutes and set up rates." These may have included Svyatoslav Olegovich's predecessors, his great-grandfathers and grandfathers (Svyatoslav's father—Oleg, his grandfather Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, his great-grandfather Yaroslav the Lawgiver, his great-great-grandfather Vladimir Svyatoslavich, and others in an ascending line: Svyatoslav, Igor, Olga. All these are his "great-grandfathers and grandfathers"). I presume, in short, that the assimilation of the land in Novgorod began very long ago, and that Olga "set up the administrations" only where they did not previously exist. She must have organized her lands, *pogosts* and manors in places to

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valuable. They may have been local nobles, as Lyubavsky believes, not without cause. But either group could join the ranks of the men-at-arms of the Novgorod princes, which was undoubtedly the case with Chudin and possibly others.

A part of their possessions could have fallen into the hands of the Ancient Rus princes as their political power increased.

This is, of course, only a hypothesis, but I think it to be more realistic than Barsov's which is equally hypothetical.



which the prince's authority did not previously extend (the land of the Drevlyane, the Luga and Msta basins), for the Kiev prince's central possessions (particularly the lands of the Polyane) were undoubtedly organized earlier.

Thus, the Kiev princes and their retinue, the boyar *muzhi*, are not divorced from the land. While recognizing the authority of the prince, they participate in administration. At the same time, however, the boyar *muzhi* do not lose their distinctive traits (their personality). We shall scarcely be mistaken in declaring that Sveneld was just such a distinguished representative of the nobility. In conformity with the chronicle, Shakhmatov argued that Sveneld was a boyar, Prince Igor's man, sent by Igor to rule in the Drevlyane land. It was Sveneld, or rather his son Mstislav the Fierce, who killed Igor when the latter tried to encroach upon his right to the Drevlyane tribute.<sup>1</sup> This hypothesis, which is not far removed from the chronicler's view, appears plausible.

In his examination of Sveneld's and Igor's behaviour, as described in the chronicles, Shakhmatov makes some very cogent and plausible suggestions, but does not change the social nature of his heroes. I do not here intend to analyse the whole episode. I am concerned only with Sveneld, as a prince's *muzh* and a prototype of the other *muzhi* who sent representatives to Byzantium on Igor's orders. Sveneld is a very rich man who has a well-equipped and powerful retinue. As a reward for his military and political services he is appointed by Igor to a highly responsible post to represent the princely power in the land of the Drevlyane, which is as yet by no means pacified. There is no direct evidence in the sources that he was a landowner who collected rent from his demesnes. But since we know that by that time the prince and the princesses owned castles and manors, we shall not be wrong in assuming that Sve-

<sup>1</sup> A. A. Шахматов, Разыскания о древнейших русских летописных сводах, СПб 1908, стр. 364—365. (A. A. Shakhmatov, *Studies of the Earliest Russian Chronicles*, St. Petersburg 1908, pp. 364-65.)

neld is no worse off in this respect than his suzerain.<sup>1</sup> This, of course, is a hypothesis.

Actions by the nobility against princes or kings are well known. Suffice it to recall the famous *chamber* mayor Pippin the Short who proclaimed himself king in place of the last Merovingian and was twice anointed by the Pope in Rome. Sveneld could with equal facility have founded a new dynasty of Kiev princes if he had succeeded in overcoming the "Ryurikovichy." I base my assumption on Shakhmatov's hypothesis that there was a serious clash between Sveneld and Igor. But it may well be that such a clash never took place. Shakhmatov himself says that there were "two different legends" at the time the chronicle was written: "One of these says that he (Mstislav Sveneldich—*Author*) killed the Kiev prince (Igor—*Author*) and this sparked off a war between the Kievites and the Drevlyane; the other says that he was killed by a Drevlyane prince and that it was this which started the war between the Kievites and the Drevlyane."<sup>2</sup>

At all events, Sveneld was one of the noble *muzhi* who recognized Igor's authority, and later Svyatoslav's. Such noble *muzhi* are repeatedly mentioned by the chronicle, among them Asmud, Vyshata in Yaroslav's time, Yan,

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<sup>1</sup> Bakhrushin observes that I, "in spite of a careful selection of examples... relating to the 10th century, could only adduce several indications of legendary origin regarding princely manors at the time, besides, these were drawn from later sources." (*Istoriik-Marxist*, No. 3, 1937, p. 169.) He holds that Olzhichi has nothing to do with Olga's name apart from being consonant with it. I will allow Bakhrushin the consonance, but the fact of Olga's ownership of that manor, testified to by the chronicler, stands until it is proved that the latter erred when he insisted that it was also considered princely in his own time. The name is immaterial and it was omitted in the *First Novgorod Annals* altogether, but the chronicler insists that Olga had a manor on the Desna. Bakhrushin's observation that Berestovo manor, which belonged to Vladimir, was not mentioned by the author before Yaroslav's time in no way refutes the fact that Vladimir possessed that manor. There is no reason to consider the facts unreliable just because they were reported some 30 or 40 years later. This also applies to my critic's third objection. Incidentally, I give seven cases of princely land tenure in the 10th century, and not three.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, op. cit., pp. 371-72.



Vyshata's son, Sveneld's contemporary Blud, who was a voivode of Yaropolk and Vladimir, and Georgy Simonovich at the time of Vladimir Monomakh. There is every reason to believe that the *muzhi* who are listed as "envoys" in Igor's and Oleg's treaties, and particularly those who commissioned "envoys," were prominent and noble people, with whom the princes acted jointly not only in foreign but also in domestic affairs.

We find Vladimir in constant consultation with his boyars and urban elders. Yaroslav's children gathered their boyars to establish the *Russkaya Pravda*. Such facts are numerous and I shall not cite them all.

The old controversy between Kluchevsky, Sergeyevich and Vladimírsky-Budanov regarding whether or not the prince was obliged to consult with his nobles, appears to be utterly fruitless. The prince could not have played a lone hand, since he was working in the interests of the growing boyar class. They supported their leader, the Grand Prince, because there was no other way in which they could strengthen their position. This was at the time the only possible form of political domination. But the powerful nobility, in turn, ensured the power of the Kiev prince. Co-operation between these two forces was inevitable, since the state grew up to serve the interests of the landowners and helped to improve their proprietary and political status. The superstructure at this time was in complete accord with the basis. The next period, the period of feudal fragmentation, was a time when the magnates became more independent, the urban population more important politically and princely authority declined.

But that period had not yet dawned. The Kiev prince was still powerful. He was the recognized head of the state, although not a sovereign. He represented the ruling nobility which in its own interests recognized his authority and shared that authority with him. Among these nobles we find Igor's son Svyatoslav, who, according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, at that time (at least at one point) sat

in Great Novgorod (this is the only interpretation, if we are to understand Constantine's clear-cut statement about ἡ ἐξω Πρωσία where Novgorod, which sent its log boats to Kiev, is followed by Smolensk and Lubech).

It is clear why we find no rival political institutions side by side with this aristocracy headed by the prince.

Sergeyevich is wrong when he asserts that Ancient Rus's political system is characterized by "a mixed form of administration, in which two elements participate, namely, the monarchic, represented by the prince, and the popular, represented by the *veche*."<sup>1</sup> This definition could be applied to the period of feudal fragmentation, but even then only with considerable reservations.

Our sources do not mention any *veche* assemblies in the state of Ancient Rus, and there could have been none under the circumstances then existing. They were held in the period of "military democracy" and appeared later with the growth of the towns and the increased political importance of the urban population.

Sergeyevich is wrong in saying that the *veche* assembly is implied in the Rus treaties with the Greeks. He believes that the sending of envoys to Byzantium to conclude a treaty not only on behalf of the prince and his boyars, but also on behalf of all the Russian people indicates that the *veche* was also a sponsor of the treaty. He says as much when he declares that "we should consider Igor's men who take part in concluding the treaty as being the entire population of Kiev and not an exclusive group of Igor's vassals." But we begin to doubt this after a closer look at the 944 Treaty. It was quoted above. It is quite true that a reference to "all the Rus people" follows that to Igor and his boyars. But a similar expression is used concerning the Greeks: the Greek kings, all the boyars and "all the Greek people. . . ." "All the Russian people" plays

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, *Lectures and Investigations in the History of Russian Law*, pp. 130-43.



a role similar to "all the Greek people," but no one infers the existence of a Constantinople *veche*. These are merely the representations of two governments, which speak on behalf of all their people. The 911 Treaty in fact makes it absolutely clear who was to sign: the envoys of Oleg, the Rus Grand Prince, and "of all the eminent and great princes and great boyars under him."

The 944 Treaty makes mention of "all the Rus people" for a very different purpose. The Russian prince refers to all the Russian people to underline the following phrase about the treaty being binding upon all the people of Rus. These treaties were concluded not on behalf of a *veche*, but on behalf of the prince and the boyars, and the prince is always mentioned first.

The treaties repeatedly emphasize that the Greek kings negotiate with the Rus Grand Prince as a representative of his country. The Rus Grand Prince is free to send as many ships to Greece as he sees fit, but he has to inform the Greeks of the number in a special deed. This is, naturally, a measure of control, to preclude the arrival in Greece of ships with hostile intentions under false pretences. The treaty also provides for measures to be taken should ships arrive from Rus without a deed. These are to be detained until the Greek Government is satisfied as to their character. For this purpose it applies to the Rus prince. There are also other cases in which it applies to him. In short, according to the treaty, the Rus Prince Igor is the head of the state. He settles all misunderstandings which arise between the two states, he forbids his envoys to commit outrages in the Greek land, he negotiates on military aid from the Greek kings, and undertakes to help the Greeks in return—something the Rus princes repeatedly did; he guarantees the inviolability of Korsun. It is he, too, who promises to abide by the articles of the treaty on behalf of all his people. "Igor, the Grand Prince, shall preserve this just friendship, and it shall not be violated while the sun shines and the world stands, now and for ever."

This emphasizes the continuity of the ruling authority: the treaty is to remain in force under Igor's successors as well.

Svyatoslav's 972 Treaty is even more explicit in this respect. It starts out by emphasizing the power of Prince Svyatoslav: "I, the Rus Prince Svyatoslav, as I have already sworn, confirm my oath on this treaty: I shall preserve peace and lasting friendship..." But this does not mean that Oleg, Igor and Svyatoslav, with whom our treaties are connected, were autocrats yielding unlimited power. Autocracy is a later phenomenon which emerged under different circumstances. The power of Oleg, Igor, Svyatoslav and Vladimir is the power of the ruling Kiev nobility headed by the princes. This power continued to grow for as long as it was in the interests of the ruling classes. At this time the Kiev prince had nothing in common with "the paid military guard." He was not "a political accident." Much less was he the "wandering comet" Kluchevsky makes him out to be. He is the head of the state, whose structure corresponded with the existing state of the productive forces and the relations of production.

I shall not consider the prince's functions as legislator, ruler and judge in detail, but there will be more below on his activities as the leader of the country's armed forces. These aspects of the Kiev prince's activities underline the importance of his authority in Ancient Rus's political system.

I shall illustrate the princes' efforts to unite Rus territory from its political history. At the moment I wish to note the major aspects of the history of princely power.

1. That power did not remain immutable during the existence of the state of Ancient Rus. Changes were connected with changes in the basis which gave birth to it.

2. This power ranged victorious through the whole of the 10th century and the first half of the 11th century in spite of the instability of the state of Ancient Rus and the repeated attempts by its components to disrupt its unity.

3. Although that unity was unstable it nevertheless



enabled the separate Slav tribes to merge into a single people and the productive forces to mature. It led to the emergence of new economic and political centres which eventually paved the way for the dismemberment of the state.

4. The landowning nobility which, thanks to this state organization, had managed to consolidate its material and political independence, played the decisive role in the fragmentation of the country.

In this manner, the forces which went to create a new period in our history, the period of feudal fragmentation, lurked and matured within the very heart of the state of Ancient Rus.

### **3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE EASTERN SLAV AND ANCIENT RUS ARMED FORCES**

The history of the armed forces of Ancient Rus must necessarily reflect the major stages in the history of the people which created that state. The following main stages should be singled out along the road traversed by the Eastern Slavs towards the formation of their state: a transition period from the pre-class system to the class system, i.e., the period of "military democracy"; the semi-patriarchal and semi-feudal period, i.e., the period in which feudal relations gained in strength; and, finally, the feudal period. Since every one of these periods is characterized by its own state of productive forces and social and political relationships it is natural to expect that the state of the armed forces should correspond to the economy and structure of society at each of the periods mentioned.

#### **The "Military Democracy" Period**

In the transition period from tribal relationships to a class society the isolation of the various tribes becomes less pronounced and they merge into a nation headed by a military commander who shares power with the popular

assembly and the council of elders. This does not mean that the very idea of the tribal system has disappeared. It merely means that the tribal system has ceased to be the predominant system.

The people are organized militarily, because a military organization is required for the military undertakings which are the people's basic function at that time. War, as a constant occupation, enhances the authority of the supreme commander and eventually transforms it from elective into hereditary power. In this manner, the tribal bodies expressing the popular will become state bodies. The foundations of hereditary monarchy and hereditary nobility are laid.

It is natural, therefore, that the armed forces and the people are identical among all peoples at this period.

"Every freeman enjoys an unlimited right to arm himself; hence, the name for every freeman is *Wer* or *Were*, his plot of land—*Were*, the sum total of his rights—*Gewere*," writes Herman Meynert of the Germans in his *Geschichte des Kriegswesens und Heerverfassungen in Europa*.<sup>1</sup>

We find a similar state of affairs among the Slavs. Among the Horvatians *vojska*, means *die Leute, homines, čeljad, ljudi, ljudstvo, narod, puk, svijet, svijetina, domači, familia, glota, obitelj, župa*. In *Boke vojska* means *čeljad (ljudi, ženje, dieca) w.p. ovoj kuci ima mnoga vojska*. (There are many members in this family.)<sup>2</sup>

To this very day among the Serbs *vojska* has the same meaning as *Zupa*, i.e., domestics, a big family. The Serbian woman calls her husband *vojno* to this day. Therefore, Jireček says, *vojevoda* means "the head of the tribe," "the head of a family."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herman Meynert, *Geschichte des Kriegswesens und Heerverfassungen in Europa*, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> *Rječnik Hrvatskoga jezika*, Skupili i obradili Dr. F. Jvekovići, Dr. Jvan Kroz u Zagrebu, 1901.

<sup>3</sup> Hermengild Jireček, *Slovanske pravo and Cechach a na Morave*, v Praze, 1863.



Among the Western Slavs *wojsko* means "a great number," "number," *eine grosse Menge, grosse Zahl*. *Wojski* means "his," "one's own."<sup>1</sup> A regiment—*pluk* in Czech and *плук* in Slavonic, *polk* in Russian, *puk* in Serbian. Even today among the Southern Slavs it means "people in general," "the common people," like the Roman *vulgus* and the German *Volk*. In ancient times it was used in a similar sense among the Czechs. Military service was then neither a privilege of some, nor a burden to others, but the duty of all. The armed forces were the armed people, and all able-bodied men went to war. This is indicated by three names: *vojska, željad, puk*. Initially, they meant "the people of the house or tribe," and, later, "the armed people."

The Byzantine authors and the historian Jordanes give us a clearer picture of the Slavs and the Antes of the period. They describe them under "military democracy," when the Slavs and the Antes, as an armed people, overran the Byzantine territory lying beyond the Danube. That was in the 6th century, but Jordanes gives almost similar information on the Antes in the 4th century, when they were engaged in a struggle against the Goths. Procopius says that "these peoples, the Slavs and the Antes, are not governed by a single man, but live in democracy since olden times, and that is why they share their joys and sorrows." (Τὰ γὰρ εὐνὴ ταῦτα Σκλαβῆνοί τε καὶ Ἀνῆσι οὐκ ἄρχονται πρὸς ἀνδρόςένός, ἀλλ' ἐν δημοκρατίᾳ ἐκ παλαιοῦ βιοτεύουσι, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοῖς τῶν πραγμάτων αἰεὶ τὰ τε εὐφορὰ καὶ τὰ δύσκολα ἐς κοινόν ἄγεται).<sup>2</sup>

The same author gives an account of a similar general meeting to debate the problem of Hilvudia: "When the rumour was circulated among the people and became known to *everyone, almost all the Antes met in assembly, considering it to be a common cause....*"

In 577, according to Menander, 100,000 Slavs crossed

<sup>1</sup> Linde, Samuel Bogomil, *Stownik języka polskiego*, 1854.

<sup>2</sup> Procopius, *De bello Gothico*, III, 1422; Прокопій из Кесаріи, Война с готами, Russ. ed., 1950, p. 297).

the Danube. He says that they were aware of their military might. When the Avars demanded the payment of tribute from the Slavs, their chieftain Dobrit replied that there was no power on earth that could subdue the Slavs.

Mauricius has much to say on the military system and the fighting qualities of the Antes. In his *Tactics and Strategy* he describes a people who were a threat to Byzantium ("who are a burden to the Empire"), in order that those "who wish to fight them may be the better prepared." He analyses the Persians, the "Scythians, i.e., the Avars," the Turks and "similar peoples," the "red-haired peoples," i.e., the "Franks, the Langobards," the Slavs, the Antes, and others. It is instructive to analyse these sketches together, for they give a clearer idea of Mauricius's view of each. This comparison reveals that, far from being at a disadvantage, the Slavs appear to have had superior fighting qualities and military system.

"The Slav and the Ante tribes," Mauricius says, "are akin in way of life, custom, and love of freedom. They can in no way be induced to slavery or subjugation; they are brave, particularly on their own soil, hardy, and easily bear heat, cold, rain, and lack of food and clothing ... they do not enslave their captives for an unlimited period, as other tribes are wont to do ... (here follows his well-known description of the life of the Slavs and the Antes—*Author*)."<sup>1</sup>

This evidence makes it quite clear that among the Slavs and the Antes all males bore arms, that their weapons were primitive and that they constituted a foot army. There are accounts, however, of Slav contacts with the sea.

It is true that one of Mauricius's statements appears to denigrate the military prowess of the Slavs and the Antes. "It is equally possible," he says, "when the enemy is numerous, but is not organized and has no leaders,

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<sup>1</sup> Mauricius Strategicus, *Report on 6th and 7th Century Slavs* (Russian edition, translated by S. A. Zhebelev, *Istoricheskoy Arkhiv*, No. 2, 1936, pp. 35-36).



such as is the case, for example, with the Slavs, the Antes and other kindred tribes."

Here the Slavs and the Antes are cited as an example, and are, therefore, not an exception. Furthermore, we have many facts refuting this statement. Mauricius himself gives us adequate information on the Slav and Ante leadership, and we can therefore only in part agree with him regarding their degree of organization. It is true that there was no organization to equal that which was introduced among the Roman troops very long ago and which long prevailed in Byzantium. Nevertheless it was an organization of their own type which corresponded to their level of social development. Had it been otherwise, they could not have annexed a considerable portion of the Eastern Roman Empire.

In order to understand that "organization," we shall have to study the structure of an armed force comprising the entire people, bearing in mind the maxim that it is organization which turns a mob into an army. We are then confronted with a problem which has for a long time baffled students, namely, the problem of the decimal system (the thousands, the hundreds and the tens). It was widely used in Kiev Rus, but its origins remain obscure to this day. There are many opinions, but there has been no special study.

Khlebnikov traces the origins of the hundreds system back to the ancient tribal system. But his conception of the tribe is nebulous: "The division into hundreds was the result of the growth of the gens into a tribe, when the existing order becomes inadequate."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimirsky-Budanov thinks that a system of administration in Rus earlier "than the princely" was based upon the "numerical division of society." A thousand corresponded to the state while the senior towns and provinces were divided into the hundreds and the tens.

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<sup>1</sup> N. Khlebnikov, *Society and State in Pre-Mongol Rus*, p. 96.

Similarly, the central ruler was the millenary, and his subordinates were the centurions and the decurions. The post of millenary originated in prehistoric times. It may be assumed that the millenaries replaced the former tribal princes. The millenary was the "leader of the people's volunteer force."<sup>1</sup>

Pavlov-Silvansky holds that "our centurions and millenaries, like the German *centenarius* and *millenarius* (or *tiuphadus*), are genetically connected with the ancient military division of the tribes into hundreds and thousands."<sup>2</sup>

Grushevsky stresses the existence of the military decimal system in the 10th century. Pointing to similar phenomena among other peoples, he considers it much more ancient than the later *druzhina*.<sup>3</sup> He holds that the decimal system was declining at the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich.<sup>4</sup>

Dyakonov takes a similar view. "The hundreds," he believes, "were survivals of the original military division when the land comprised the thousand and was partitioned into the hundreds and the tens. The hundreds division was used by all European peoples."<sup>5</sup>

Yushkov suggests that the millenaries and the centurions may have existed since the inception of Ancient Rus, and that the millenaries, centurions and decurions are of military origin. The decimal system was used by the armies of all peoples at a certain stage of their development. "During the transition to the tribal system, and particularly during the disintegration of tribal relationships, the army of the Eastern Slavs, like those of other peoples, was divided into the thousands, hundreds and tens led by millenaries, centurions and decurions

<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimirovsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>2</sup> N. P. Pavlov-Silvansky, *Feudalism in Appanage Rus*, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of the *druzhina* see p. 450 et seq.—Tr.

<sup>4</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 390-92; Vol. III, pp. 233-36.

<sup>5</sup> M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State System*, p. 184.



respectively. Following the conquest of a tribe, the Kiev princes had to garrison the tribal or other important centres. A larger garrison, the thousand, was stationed at these points. It was subdivided into hundreds (the millenary was the garrison commander, while the centurions were his unit commanders). Smaller garrisons, under the command of centurions, were stationed in the minor cities."<sup>1</sup> It is not clear how we are to consider the various tribal thousands and hundreds before they fell into the hands of the Kiev princes. In any case, Yushkov distinguishes two kinds of thousands, hundreds and tens—the tribal, and those belonging to the Kiev princes. It would seem, therefore, that when the latter installed their garrisons they disbanded the local thousands and hundreds. Yushkov does not clarify this.

Presnyakov's view regarding the origin of the decimal system is in sharp contrast to the more or less consonant opinions given above. He believes the decimal system to have been introduced by the princes, and declares that "the hypothesis of the prehistoric people's millenniaes and thousands is not substantiated either by Russian sources or by comparative historical studies."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, he considers the thousand separately from the hundred. He believes the latter to be an urban institution with juridical and administrative functions and not a military one. He points to the lack of documentary evidence regarding the ancient origin of the decimal division, a fact which baffles some of the West-European bourgeois scholars (Schwerin and Ritschel) into confusion.

We must agree with this last statement. The sources do not throw any light on the origins of the system. They merely find it in being. But this only corroborates Grushvsky's assertion that since we discover "this decimal military system in operation in the earliest period of the

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<sup>1</sup> S.V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

Russian state (the end of the 10th century)" it should be considered "as an ancient and pre-*druzhina* system of defence."

At all events, the latter view is more likely than that which claims that it was the princes who introduced the thousands—a hypothesis which is also not substantiated by Russian sources.

"Comparative historical studies" also appear to refute Presnyakov.

The most obvious flaw in his hypothesis is that it completely ignores that great period in the history of the Slavs when the armed people constituted the army, the period of "military democracy."

The fact that there was no "organized people's volunteer force" under the Kiev princes in the 10th and 11th centuries, as Presnyakov thinks, does not warrant the assertion that such a force had never existed, the more so since the sources, which are mostly Byzantine, dating to the pre-Kiev period, reveal that the Slavs and the Antes were all armed and operated against Byzantium in very large numbers led by their chieftains. Obviously a mob could never have defeated the Byzantines and the Goths.

Let us, none the less, endeavour to gather together the facts regarding the decimal organization from comparative history.

The Peru tribes were divided into tens, hundreds and thousands. Here is what Kunov thinks of the origins of this division: "Since such a (decimal—*Author*) division of the tribes could have scarcely originated from a natural fission of the old tribes, it must be assumed that in the past a new division of the Kechua tribes had taken place for some special reason not connected with consanguinity. It was probably based on the number of able-bodied males the various tribes could muster in the event of war. This is the more credible since the *atunalyu*, the chief tribe, is also called the *uaranka* ... i.e., a 'thousand.' At the same time, an ordinary tribe (*alyu*) is called a *pa-*



*chaka* ... which means a hundred, while a large family is called a *chunka* ... i.e., a ten. It has been ascertained that, on the average, the ordinary *alyu* could assemble a hundred, and the *atunalyu*—a thousand adult males.... I am inclined to presume that this (division—*Author*) was effected by the Incas for military purposes."<sup>1</sup>

Lapinsky, a traveller, presents interesting facts on the Adygei.

"The Adygei are internally grouped into three tribes; the most numerous are the Shapsugi, then come the Abaz-dehi, and the least numerous are the Ubyhi.... The latter constitute a single generation. Every generation is divided into a certain number of gens, and that in turn is divided into families. But the generations, gens and families of each tribe are intermixed. Representatives of each generation and gens are to be found in each district. The administrative division, if I may use the term, consists of a hundred homesteads or families, making up a village which occupies a full square mile. These hundreds are, as it were, separate republics governed by their elders.... Every hundred homesteads send two of their representatives to the general assembly of the land or tribe. Internally, the hundred falls into tens of homesteads, and then representatives, together with the iman, make up the council and the law court of the hundred.... The unmarried sons and daughters live with their parents in the homestead." The number of inhabitants in such a homestead may be as high as a hundred.<sup>2</sup>

This study of Adygei life is of great interest, although it does not seem to be very accurately recorded. It does not specify the time when the decimal organization originated. But clearly it existed at a time when the tribal system and the large patriarchal family were breaking up.

<sup>1</sup> Кунов, Всеобщая история хозяйства, т. I, стр. 250—251. (Kunov, *A General History of Economy*, Vol. I, pp. 250-51.)

<sup>2</sup> *Zapiski Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1863, pp. 15-16.

Similar facts are to be found among the Mongols.

The Mongolian nukers were rewarded by their khans with "such a number of nomad *ails* as could raise a hundred or a thousand warriors, and, rarely, ten thousand. In conformity with this, all Mongolian tribes, all generations, gens and clans were divided into "tens," "hundreds," "thousands" and "tens of thousands," i.e., into groups of *ails* capable of raising ten, a hundred, a thousand, etc., warriors. This grouping was naturally very approximate and remote from mathematical precision."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimirtsov, an expert on Mongolian history, discovers facts similar to those in the Russian documents—namely, that a decimal organization is a military one. The Mongolian khans find it in operation and merely make it serve their own ends.

It is most natural to presume that this division into tens, hundreds and thousands originated when the gens and tribes united for the common weal into large military bodies, i.e., under "military democracy," when the armed people took part in military undertakings. This decimal system did not reject tribal ties altogether, but supplemented them. It introduced order into the movement of the masses, turning the mob into an army. That was how the Germans advanced against Rome. The Slavs also crossed the Danube in their tens, and possibly hundreds of thousands in this fashion, fighting every inch of the way against the Byzantine army and destroying its strongholds.

A hint at the decimal system is contained in the Hebrew legends in the later part of the Bible, the *Exodus*.

Iofor, Moses's father-in-law, advised the latter to place millenaries, centurions, quindecurions and decurions at the head of the people, in order to regulate the administration and the law courts of the people being led out of

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<sup>1</sup> Б. Я. Владимирцов, Общественный строй монголов, Л. 1934, стр. 103—104. (B. Y. Vladimirtsov, *The Social System Among the Mongols*, Leningrad, 1934, pp. 103-04.)



Egypt.<sup>1</sup> This division was also needed for military purposes. On their way the Jews fought the Amalikityans<sup>2</sup> and defeated them. This could have been done only by an organized army.

Hitherto the people had been governed by the elders. There is also mention of general meetings.<sup>3</sup>

For the moment I leave aside the German hundreds and the Roman centuries.

There is no reason to identify the gens with the hundreds, as Delbrück<sup>4</sup> does, since the tribal order in itself was not in need of additional subdivisions into tens, hundreds and thousands. But this became absolutely necessary under more comprehensive alliances which were, so to say, set up with a purpose. Great masses of people had to introduce a new element into their organization, compared with the tribal system, in order to fulfil the military tasks which faced them at the time. The new element was the decimal system. It originated under "military democracy," and was still in evidence during Rus's early period when it had large military forces at its disposal.

It would be useful for us to estimate the numerical strength of the Eastern Slavs, but that is a hopeless task. It can be done only approximately. Delbrück's attempt to solve this problem with regard to the Germans was unsuccessful. Observers were struck by the numerical strength of the Slavs in comparison with other peoples. They were, in fact, the most numerous people in Europe. This is proved by the toponymy and archaeology. The documentary sources are also quite clear on this point. The testimony of 6th and 7th century Byzantine authors and of the Goth historian Jordanes is particularly striking. The latter says: "Dakia borders on it (the Danube—*Author*),

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<sup>1</sup> *Exodus*, XVIII, v. 21-24; XVII, v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, XVII, v. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, XII, v. 6.

<sup>4</sup> G. Delbrück, *A History of the Art of War*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1937, pp. 31-36.

protected by high mountains as by a crown, to the left of which and from the upper reaches of the Vistula over an immense expanse there lives the great people of the Wends.<sup>1</sup> (*Per immensa spatia Winidorum natio populosa consedit.*) "Although at the present their name changes depending on tribe and locality, they are mainly known as the Sclaveni and the Antes. The Sclaveni live in the area from the city of Noviodunsky and the so-called Mursiiskoye Lake up to the Dniester and to the Vistula in the north. The Antes, the strongest (*fortissimi*) among them, live around the bend of the Black Sea coast from the Dniester to the Dnieper."<sup>2</sup>

Procopius does not differ from Jordanes in his estimate of the territory of the Antes and their numbers. "The Meotian Bay drains into the Euxine pontus. The local inhabitants, who were previously known as the Cimmerii, are now called the Uturguts. The territories beyond, to the north, are occupied by the *countless Ante peoples*" (*ἔθνη τὰ Ἀντῶν ἀμετρα ἴδρονται*).

When the Goths spoke of the immense expanses occupied by the Eastern Slavs they naturally meant a territory which was so large as to defy the reckoning powers of the Goths as well as the Byzantines. Naturally, the people which succeeded in occupying such a vast expanse of land must have appeared "countless" (*populosa natio, ἔθνος ἀμετρον*) to the Goths and the Greeks.

Mauricius, the Greek military author, who wrote of the numerical strength of the Antes, thought it possible to defeat them only due to their political disunity. "Since they have many chieftains among them and the latter are not in accord with each other, it would be best to win some of them over to our side by promises of valuable gifts, particularly those who are our neighbours (Byzantium—*Author*) and have intercourse with others, in order to pre-

<sup>1</sup> P. Shafarik, op. cit., Vol. II, Book III, pp. 31-33.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Addendum, p. 36.



clude an alliance between them under the leadership of one" (ἵνα μὴ πρὸς πάντας ἔκυρα ἔνωσιν, ἢ μοναρχίαν ποιήσῃ). This was recalled by Masudi early in the 10th century, when the Eastern Slavs in large measure achieved what the Greeks so much feared. "If the Slavs were not in such a state of fragmentation, and if there was less discord among their tribes, they could not be resisted by any people in the world."

The Slavs and the Antes, a numerous people, were organized according to the decimal system when they fought the Goths and launched their mass offensive against the Eastern Roman Empire. I think that this is the most reasonable hypothesis.

There are a few facts, written and material, on the Slav and Ante weapons of that period.

The *Ipaty Annals* for 1114 have preserved an ancient legend which says that prior to the discovery of how to forge metal weapons the people "fought with clubs and stones."<sup>1</sup> The chronicler was fully justified in thinking that his ancestors fought with such weapons.

But the earliest of our sources find the Slavs at a later stage.

In the 1st century A.D., Tacitus, uncertain whether to classify the Wends among the Germans or the Sarmatians, concludes that they should rather be included among the Germans, because their houses are strongly built, they have shields, and are capable of moving on foot in excellent order, a practice utterly foreign to the Sarmatians, who spent their lives in nomad tents and on horseback. The Slavs and the Germans, who had little dealings with saddle-horses, are obviously contrasted to the conglomerate of predominantly nomadic peoples known as the "Sarmatians."

Ioann of Ephesus reports that these same Slavs, who were armed with javelins before they came into contact

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<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 200.

with the Byzantine army, rapidly re-equipped themselves, to his surprise and chagrin, on the Byzantine model and learned to use Roman arms better than the Byzantines (the Rhomaioi) themselves. This must be an overstatement. It is doubtful that the Slavs would have run the risk of attacking the Rhomaioi armed only with javelins. They must have had other weapons, but of course they were not as well equipped as the Byzantine army. Realizing the superiority of its weapons, they adopted what they could. Otherwise, they could never have defeated the Greeks.

According to Procopius, the Slavs usually went into battle on foot<sup>1</sup> with shields and javelins but without coats of mail.<sup>2</sup> Mauricius says that the Slav warriors were armed with a pair of short javelins for throwing and thrusting, and that they also used wooden bows and arrows. Some of them carried large and unwieldy shields.<sup>3</sup>

The weapons carried during the period of "military democracy" did not remain unchanged. Under the impact of serious clashes with their highly developed and well-equipped adversary, the Slav people's army tried (not without success) to re-equip itself on the Roman pattern.

Thus, we find the Slavs and the Antes in the 6th century in a state of "military democracy." During the same century, the Slavs and the Antes made great progress in military art and defeated the Eastern Roman Empire, in much the same way as the Germans routed the Western Roman Empire a century earlier.

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<sup>1</sup> Ὅς μάχην δὲ πανιστάμενοι πεζῇ μὲν ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους οἱ πολλοὶ ἴσται ἀσπίδια καὶ ἀκόντια ἐν χερσὶν ἔχοντες, ὑώρακα δὲ οὐδαμῇ ἐνδιδύσκονταν. Procopius, *De bello Gothico*, III, 14<sub>25</sub>.

<sup>2</sup> Hi tamen inter germanos potius referentur, quia et domos figunt et scuta gestant et pedum usu ac pernicitate gaudent quae omnia diversa Sarmatis sunt, in plaustra equoque viventibus (Tacitus, *Germania*. "Drevnie Germantsy," a collection of documents, p. 81).

<sup>3</sup> "Ὀπλιζονται δὲ ἀκοντίοις μικροῖς δυσὶν ἑκαστος αὐτῶν. Τινὲς σ' αὐτῶν παισχουταρίους γενναίους μὲν δυσμεταλομιστοὺς δὲ." See P. Shafarik, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Book III, p. 42. (Cf. *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, II, p. 35.)



The world of antiquity, which was decaying due to a crisis of the slave system, collapsed under the blows of slave uprisings and the "barbarian" invasions from the west, north, and east. The role of the "barbarians" was everywhere the same. They brought rejuvenation to the moribund world of antiquity and, thanks to their community system, created new and more progressive forms of social relationships, namely, feudal relationships.

### The Army of Ancient Rus

*Introductory Notes.* The state of Ancient Rus unified the vast territory of Eastern Europe which lay between the Danube and the Black Sea in the south, and the great lakes, up to the very ocean in the north, and between the Baltic in the west and the Urals and the Volga in the east. It could not have been otherwise, for it unified not only "countless numbers" of Eastern Slavs, but also many other non-Slav peoples.

It did not emerge overnight. It has a long history, which we do not know in detail, but it can be traced.

Kluchevsky attempted to reconstruct this oft-neglected period of our history. On the basis of the evidence in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* and corroborated by Masudi relating to the Duleby and the Volynyane, Kluchevsky demonstrates the existence of a large military alliance of the Duleby, headed by a prince, as early as the end of the 6th century.

"This military alliance," Kluchevsky says, "should be placed at the very beginning of our history: it ... began in the 6th century, on the very fringe, in the south-western corner of our plain, on the north-eastern slopes and foothills of the Carpathians."<sup>1</sup>

Arab sources tell us of other polities among the Eastern Slavs in the "pre-Kiev period" following the disintegra-

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<sup>1</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part I, p. 104.

tion of that first alliance under the blows of the Avars. They were: Slavia, Kuyavia and Artania (see Part VIII).

It is necessary to recall this development of the Eastern Slavs prior to the formation of the state of Ancient Rus in order to show that, as was the case among other peoples, "military democracy" was a transition to the state and that the state itself appeared in bold relief shortly after. The Eastern Slavs, therefore, underwent a natural development and there was no gap in their history from the Antes to Kiev.

I need this fact here, since military science developed along with society, and the military system must have changed with the appearance of the state.

The citizens remained warlike under this early feudal state. Early feudal states, as a rule, possess enormous military resources enabling them to expand and consolidate their frontiers, draw their fragments together into a polity and give the people an opportunity of developing their productive forces.

The part played by these states in the history of European and Asian peoples is very great. Strictly speaking, it is this period in the history of a people which determines its place in subsequent history. It is then that the basic territory of the state takes shape, while the people accumulates strength for its domestic construction as well as for large-scale activity in foreign affairs. The Frankish monarchy under Pipin and Charlemagne, Armenia under Tigran II the Great and Rus under Vladimir are brilliant periods in the history of Western Europe, Transcaucasia and Eastern Europe.

Account should be taken of the special features of the historical development of each early feudal state.

The state of Ancient Rus was faced with very clear-cut tasks which were by no means imaginary. Nor were they the result of chance considerations or adventurism on the part of the grand princes. They strike the eye as we examine the activities of the state. They are problems con-



nected with the Drevlyane, the Khazars, the Danube and Byzantium. The last two were handed down as a legacy from the Antes, for whom the Danube and Byzantium long remained the main objects of a protracted and persistent struggle. The Drevlyane and Khazar problems became more acute with the growth of the state of Ancient Rus.

Geographically, the Duleby, later the Drevlyane, were so situated that they attracted the attention of the Polish state. The issue was quite clear: either Poland, which showed a clear tendency to expand eastwards, would assimilate the Eastern Slav territory of Galich, Volyn and the Drevlyane, or Rus would succeed in gathering around her all the Eastern Slav lands and retain them. Herein lay the cause of the protracted and bitter struggle on its western border.

The integration of the Polyane, the Severyane, the Radimichy and the Vyatichy with Kiev was a vital and urgent task. Upon it hinged the existence of the state of Ancient Rus.

The efforts to incorporate the Tivertsy and the Ulichy into the state of Ancient Rus were a continuation of the struggle of the Antes for the Danube and the Black Sea.

Rus did not engage in any adventurism, but resisted the encroachments of its neighbours on the battle-field, being faced with clear-cut problems which she solved systematically and unflinchingly. It is no mere chance, therefore, that it was this heroic period that the Russian people remembered for all time and recorded with particular vividness in their epic tales.

War was the basic means of solving the problems facing an early feudal state, such as Ancient Rus or the European states of the same type. Consequently, the organization of armed forces was a vital problem.

In the state of Ancient Rus, the old democratic military system, under which participation in the armed forces was the right and duty of all freemen, was not immediately replaced by the feudal army system. There is no reason to presume any radical changes in the structure of the army

in its initial period, since there was a large number of free peasants who, it is true, were gradually being turned into serfs. It is true, also, that the government had already become divorced from the people, the popular congress (the *veche*) was silent, but the Grand Prince, surrounded by his nobles, still as a military chieftain headed not only his men-at-arms, whose numbers were few and inadequate for large-scale military undertakings, but also the voluntary units made up of free community members. The feudal army, composed of vassals and sub-vassals, finally took shape following the successful development of feudal relations, when the number of free peasants was sharply reduced, when serfdom took firm root and when the feudal lord, the former lord of the manor who had become a seignior, appeared as intermediary between the prince and the peasantry, largely ruined by internecine wars. But even so, in emergencies, the authorities frequently appealed to the masses.

In the Frankish state this period began in the time of Charlemagne who had use for only a small highly skilled army. The people's voluntary units lived their last in the time of his grandchildren and the military organization became based on vassalage. It was only in the Landsturm, the voluntary army raised against invasions, that conscription continued.<sup>1</sup> Similar developments were characteristic of every feudal state, including Kiev Rus.

Every scholar who has studied the military system of Kiev Rus must have noted the existence of two elements in the armed force, namely, the *druzhina* and the *voi*.

The chronicles, in fact, speak of this unequivocally. "You have your father's *druzhina* and *voi*," the men-at-arms are reported as telling Prince Boris in 1015. But each of these elements has its own history, and even when they exist side by side we should differentiate between these two unequal parts of the Kiev army.

<sup>1</sup> Franz Mehring, *Essays* (Очерки по истории войн и военного искусства), Russ. ed., Moscow, 1941, pp. 67-68.



## The *Voi*

In the period of mature feudalism the armed vassals of every feudal potentate—his *druzhina*—constituted the main body of his armed forces. But during the early feudal period the prince retained many functions of the supreme leader of the "military democracy" period, while his nobles were not as yet numerous or sufficiently strong politically.

We should bear in mind also that the tasks facing the early feudal state of Ancient Rus were so great that they could not be tackled without the participation of the masses. But the term "masses" has various connotations.

All our sources indicate that village communities grew up out of the ruins of the tribal system. They were based on economic rather than blood ties. Classes already existed. Slavery had existed for a long time. The nobility appeared, coming partly from the ranks of the tribal elders and partly from the prince's military servants. We also find merchants. Social processes and the existence of private land tenure were conducive to the growth of proprietary inequality among the members of the community. The growth of large landholdings and the processes just mentioned slowly but surely led to the establishment of the feudal system. The feudal army, however, did not fully develop in the initial period of the early feudal state.

The prince and his nobles, of course, led the army and were all military men. It can scarcely be doubted that each of them had a *druzhina* of his own. On the other hand, it is clear that these *druzhinas* were inadequate to undertake large-scale campaigns. As before, it was the people who took part in the big campaigns, although they had, on the whole, ceased to be an army. It is also clear that it was not the entire people that took part in these campaigns, but only a definite number of *voi*. Their numbers varied according to circumstances.

The question inevitably arises: what part was played

in these campaigns by the bulk of the people, namely, the free members of the community?

Our scholars disagree as to the term used in the sources to describe these free members. I side with those who consider "*smerd*" to have been one of these. I have given my arguments above. I believe that the *smerds* took part in these undertakings as *voi*, a fact supported by our sources. Here are a number of other views.

Dyakonov does not doubt that the *smerds* were a part of the "voluntary army" and "that the *smerds* were the foot warriors of the volunteer army."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimirsky-Budanov states definitely that "the people's voluntary army consisted of all adult males from town and village. . . . It was not the practice for all males without exception to participate in a campaign. But there were a few cases of such levies in mass."<sup>2</sup>

Grushevsky believes that in these campaigns (he means the princes' campaign against the Polovtsy in 1103) "regiments consisting of townsfolk and villagers served side by side with the *druzhinas*."<sup>3</sup>

There are, however, some divergent opinions.

In one of his early papers in 1908 Romanov draws a line of distinction between the *smerds* in Novgorod and those living along the Dnieper. He acknowledges the participation of *smerds* only in the Novgorod army. In Kiev, he thinks, there was a people's voluntary army raised by the *veche* and another raised by the prince. The author insists that it was only the prince and not the *veche* who could dispose of the *smerds*. He singles out the Novgorod *smerds* "owing to the peculiarity of the Novgorod system

<sup>1</sup> M. A. Dyakonov bases his conclusion on a story in the *Ipaty* and *Lawrenty Annals* on the Dolob feudal congress of 1103 and 1111 and the inscription in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1245, which reads: "When he came in he gathered together many *smerds* on foot. . . ." (M. A. Dyakonov, *Essays of Ancient Rus's Social and State Systems*, pp. 102, 104.)

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, pp. 86-87.

<sup>3</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 103.



in later times," which, he holds, "does not give us ground to transfer earlier aspects of Novgorod life to Kiev without additional proof."<sup>1</sup>

Yushkov sided with Romanov although he was opposed to his drawing a line of distinction between the Novgorod *smerds* and those of Kiev. He agreed that they did not participate even in the campaign against the Polovtsy, which was waged in defence of the land and was a campaign for the common weal, but it was their duty to provide horses for the prince and sacrifice their arable land, their only means of subsistence. This was done, Yushkov added, at the insistence of the princes and their "*druzhinas*."

Both views are identical also in that they stress that the people's voluntary army depended on the *veche*, which had no right to dispose of the *smerds* who were under the jurisdiction of the princes (Romanov) or of the princes and their *druzhinas* (Yushkov).<sup>2</sup>

Yushkov's view of the *smerds* is well known. He believes them to be "a special, feudally dependent section of the rural population" and lays special stress on the "close ties between the *smerds* and the princely economy." At one point he flatly states that they are "a group of peasants dependent on the demesne."<sup>3</sup>

This leads him to conclude that the *veche* had no right to call up the *smerds* and that they could be mustered only by the princes and their men-at-arms. Hence his support for Romanov's outdated view.

In 1947, Romanov published another paper, entitled *Men and Customs in Ancient Rus*, in which he returns to the problem. The author declares that "today he would not

<sup>1</sup> Б. А. Романов, Смердий [конь и смерд. „Известия Академии наук“, отделение русского языка и словесности, т. XIII, кн. 3, СПб 1908, стр. 23 и др. (B. A. Romanov, *The Smerd's Horse and the Smerd*, *Izvestia Akademii Nauk*, otdeleniye russkogo yazyka i slovesnosti, Vol. XIII, Book 3, St. Petersburg, p. 23 et al.)

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Essays on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus*, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

support as categorically as he did before" his old thesis that it was only the *smerd* horses that were used in military campaigns, while the *smerds* themselves remained behind.

There is actually no reason to argue with Romanov on this score at the moment. I examine his argument only to demonstrate that Yushkov's opinion on the *smerds* and their participation in the army is unsubstantiated.

A closer examination of Romanov's old arguments shows that they were in substance based on a particular interpretation of the story of the Dolob Congress as it appeared in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1103 (it is repeated in the *Lavrenty* and the *Voskresensk Annals*). It says: "... and Svyatopolk's *druzhina* began to say: spring is not the time to fight; do we want to ruin the *smerd* and his arable land?" The *Lavrenty Annals* say: "... for it is not suitable to go forth this spring; are we to ruin the *smerds* and their land?" The *Ipaty Annals* for 1111 read: "... now is not the time to take the *smerds* from their arable land." And then again: "... he will ruin the *smerds* and the *smerds'* land."<sup>1</sup> The texts which follow stress the importance of the horse to the peasant. The 1111 story puts greater stress on the *smerd* and his ties with his agricultural holding, although it also mentions the horse. ("... He will ruin the *smerds* and the *smerds'* land. But I marvel, brother, that you are solicitous of the *smerds* and their horses.") The story for 1103 appears to lay greater stress on the horses used by the *smerds* in their tillage.

If we accept Shakhmatov's opinion that the 1103 text was a source for the 1111 account, we must inquire whether the chronicler could have given his 1111 text "a totally different meaning," as Romanov believed.<sup>2</sup> The meaning

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.—Author.

<sup>2</sup> B. A. Romanov, op. cit., p. 3. The author re-examines the chronicler's reports of the Dolob Congress of 1103-1111 in his new paper entitled Люди и нравы древней Руси, стр. 132—142 (*Men and Customs in Ancient Rus*, pp. 132-42). He uses these texts to study relationships between the Kiev upper classes and the *smerds* under Vladimir Monomakh,



of these events was quite clear to the people of the 12th century and there could have been no incentive at all to amend the 1103 account. A closer examination of the two texts shows that there is no contradiction between them.

I believe it was first Karamzin,<sup>1</sup> and later Solovyov and Grushevsky, who detected the meaning of this account. "The campaign was decided upon in principle," says Grushevsky, "and only the date was debated. Svyatopolk's men-at-arms considered *spring* to be an unsuitable time, because of the agricultural work: we shall ruin the *smerds* and interrupt their agricultural labour, they reasoned. Monomakh asserted that this should not be considered because the farmers, the *smerds*, were in no way safe from the Polovtsy." "And so Monomakh's plan was approved and the campaign was to start immediately, i.e., in spring."<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the army set out in March. Solovyov gives a similar interpretation. In 1103, Vladimir began to persuade Svyatopolk to launch a campaign "against the heathen *in spring*." His men-at-arms replied that it was not a suitable time to take the villagers from their land... etc.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, the argument was primarily about the date. The question as to whether the *smerds* were to participate or not was not debated at all. They were mentioned only because the princes and their men-at-arms were concerned with their work in the fields. I am in complete agreement with Romanov and Yushkov that in this case the *smerds* mentioned were those dependent on the prince and his men-at-arms, and not just *smerds* in general. The stress laid on the horses is quite understandable too, for the

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rather than the *smerds* themselves or their participation in the armed force. For my opinion on his views see Part V.

<sup>1</sup> N. M. Karamzin, *A History of the Russian State*, Book I, Vol. II, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-03. (*Italics mine.—Author.*)

<sup>3</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 343. (*Italics mine.—Author.*)

*smerds* were not to be conscripted *en masse* at all, while their horses, it seems, were to be taken in such numbers as to jeopardize the economies of the princes and the men-at-arms. The horses were mainly needed for the baggage trains without which it was well-nigh impossible to start out. In those days, cavalry units were not very numerous, and were apparently provided with horses by the princes, a fact mentioned in the sources.

But if we accept the fact that the *smerds* constituted the bulk of the rural agricultural population, i.e., the majority of the Russian people, whether in the Dnieper or in the Volkhov areas, the problem of *smerd* participation in the army appears in a totally different light. Then there is always the need to take into account the political system of Kiev Rus. It is not hard to prove, for instance, that as a rule the urban *veche* (and it is only the urban that can be considered here) does not function in the state of Ancient Rus. The hey-day of *veche* congresses falls in the period of its fragmentation. The prince and the *veche*, then, cannot be counterposed, because only the prince and his nobles decided the problems of war and peace. It was they, too, who recruited the army and determined its size, depending on the circumstances. In the 10th century, the state systems of Novgorod and Kiev did not differ to such an extent that they could be contrasted. That is why the events in Novgorod's military history may serve as a source for a definition of the military system of the state of Ancient Rus as a whole. And it is quite clear that the *smerds* took part in Novgorod campaigns.

After his successful campaign against Kiev in 1016, when the Novgorodites helped him to defeat Svyatopolk, Yaroslav "began to reward his *voi*, giving the *starostas* 10 *grivnas* each, the *smerds* one *grivna* each, and the Novgorodites 10 *grivnas* each, and sent them all home."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Novgorod Annals* for 1016; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 175. (Italics mine.—Author.)



There are no such clear-cut statements indicating the presence of *smerds* in the army during the early period of the Dnieper area. They appear late in the 11th and early 12th centuries and later. Thus, Vladimir Monomakh says in his *Precepts*: "And as we were travelling to the *gorod* of Priluka we were suddenly met by Polovtsy princes with 8,000 men, and we wanted very much to fight them, but our weapons had been sent on carts in advance, and so we entered the *gorod*. Only one Semtsa was taken alive and a few *smerds*."<sup>1</sup> Even Romanov has to admit that these *smerds* were in Vladimir Monomakh's army ("it appears that these *smerds* were in the prince's army").<sup>2</sup>

The item for 1159 tells of a battle at Ushitsa when 300 *smerds* defected to Ivan Berladnik during his siege of the *gorod* ("and the *smerds* jumped over the parapet and ran to Ivan"). Romanov held that this was proof neither for nor against *smerd* participation in the army. But since the story concerns military action and the *smerds* deserted to Ivan Berladnik during a battle, it would be more logical to assume that they went over to Berladnik not merely in search of his protection, but as members of one army crossing over to another with the intention of joining its ranks and fighting under Berladnik's command. "And 300 of them (the *smerds*—*Author*) deserted," i.e., Berladnik's military force was increased by 300 warriors.

The *Ipaty Annals* for 1245 clearly say that Rostislav "came in and gathered many *smerds* on foot, and assembled them in Peremyshl." The item for 1221 describes the night attack made by Daniil and Vasilyok, the sons of Roman, near Byelcy and Cherven: "Boyar captured boyar, *smerd* captured *smerd*, the men of one *gorod* captured those of another, so that not a single manor remained free."<sup>3</sup> In this case we should take into account not only

<sup>1</sup> *Lawrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 240; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> B. A. Romanov, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, pp. 341, 529, 494.

the captured, but also the captors, i.e., the army of the Romanovichy, in which boyars, townsfolk and *smerds* took part. It is clear that *smerd* participation in the army is not refuted by the sources.

Finally—and this is a cardinal point in my polemic with Yushkov—it should be stressed that Romanov did not deny *smerd* participation in the Kiev army in general, but only insisted that “the *smerds* were not included in the people’s volunteer force *which was raised by the veche, and not the prince.*” What I am concerned with in this case is to prove that the *smerds* were members of the army. Who had the right to recruit them is another question, which, I believe, is easily answered if we accept that there was no one, apart from the prince, who could muster an army in general and mobilize the *smerds*, in particular.

It should be admitted, however, that we have no clear-cut statements to this effect in the sources for the 10th century. The first such accounts date back to 1016 for Novgorod, and for the Dnieper area, in Vladimir Monomakh’s *Precepts*, i.e., the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th century. I do not doubt that if the *smerds* participated in the army of the 11th century, they must have done so to a greater extent before. The earlier the date, the greater their number, until we get back to the period when the entire people constituted the army. If we admit that the *smerds* were not only bondmen, but the bulk of the rural population, which included both freemen and bondmen, it is this very mass of the rural population that we shall discover in the army even if tribal terms are used to describe it.

In 907 Oleg mustered “many Varangians and Slovenes, and Chuds, and Slovenes, and Krivichy, and Merya, and Drevlyane, and Radimichy, and Polyane, and Severyane, and Vyatichy, and Horvatians, and Duleby, and Tivertsy.” In 944 Igor “gathered many *voi*, Varangians, and Rus,



and Polyane, and Slovenes, and Krivichy, and Tivertsy, and Pechenegs."

The latter, it transpires, were hired by Igor, who took hostages from among them.

In considering the conditions proposed by the Greeks, Igor conferred only with his men-at-arms but took tribute "for all the *voi*."

We discover similar facts in the account of Olga's campaign against the Drevlyane. The latter sent her their "best" men, numbering 20, and then again they sent her their "best men, who ruled the land of the Drevlyane." It was about them that the Drevlyane later inquired: "Where are our men-at-arms whom we have sent thee?" After destroying 5,000 Drevlyane by means of a ruse, Olga returned to Kiev and "mustered *voi*" to start a campaign against the land of the Drevlyane. This campaign took place. The chronicler mentions "numerous *voi* once again."

In 980, Vladimir "gathered many *voi*" as well as "Varangians, and Slovenes and Chuds and Krivichy," for his campaign against Polotsk. It was apparently with this army that he advanced against Yaropolk in Kiev. An item for 988 says that Vladimir built strongholds in the south of his state and "began to gather the best men from among the Slovenes, the Krivichy, the Chuds, and the Vyatichy, and settled them in the *gorods*." This is the last report in the chronicle mentioning the tribes which constituted the army of the Kiev prince and from whose ranks the "best *muzhi*" were selected to man the strongholds.

The latter report specifically states that "the best men" were required for a special purpose. Other reports indicate that the free population among the various tribes was inducted into the army. Naturally, not the entire population was mustered, but only a certain part. Its numbers were apparently determined by the prince himself, depending on the length of the campaign, distances to be covered, the strength of the adversary and other considerations of a military character.

The chronicler uses other terms to describe Yaroslav's campaigns. He advances against Kiev at the head of the "Novgorodites." "And Svyatopolk's voivode, riding along the bank, began to reproach the *Novgorodites*, saying: Why did you come with this lame man?... "And when the *Novgorodites* heard this..." (1016). But he does not forget the old terminology: "And Yaroslav, having gathered Rus and Varangians, and Slovenes, advanced against Boleslav and Svyatopolk" (1018). "Yaroslav gathered many *voi*—Varangians and Slovenes—and came to Kiev" (1036). But then the term "Slovenes" is substituted by the equipollent "Novgorodites," and these, of course, include not only "Slovenes," but also Krivichy. "There was not a single region," Kluchevsky wrote a long time ago, "which consisted of a single complete tribe. Most of the regions comprised different tribes or parts thereof."<sup>1</sup>

The latest excavations by Tretyakov and Rybakov give us a deeper insight into the chronicle's story of the Eastern Slav tribes. They indicate that, from the 7th century at least, tribal names are used to denote geographical and territorial units, rather than tribes in the precise meaning of the word.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the Slovenes, the Polyane and the Krivichy in the 9th-10th centuries are not the old tribes, but rather the population of the territory on which these

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that Zonaras, the commander of the Byzantine Imperial Guard, who lived in the late 11th and early 12th centuries and who later became monk and historian, reporting on the arrival of a Rus army to assist Vasily II in 988, calls this Rus detachment *λαός Ῥωσικός*. ("... The Emperor attacked them with the aid of the Russian people, and that he, having concluded an alliance of kinship with their prince Vladimir through his sister Anna, received from them an auxiliary military detachment....") Leo of Ostia, a chronicler of the late 11th century, who used the accounts of his predecessor Amatus, relating the story of the war of 1019 in Italy, where Russians fought in the Byzantine army, says: "The Normans were victorious in the first three encounters, but they were defeated and routed in the fourth encounter when they had to contend with the Russian people (*cum gente Russorum*)...." (V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1908, p. 206.) *Gens Russorum* and *λαός Ῥωσικός* mean of course the Russians who comprised the army.

<sup>2</sup> P. N. Tretyakov, *East Slav Tribes*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1948, p. 167.



tribes lived at some time in the past. In short, the chronicler's terminology was outdated and only gradually gave way to the new one, based on the names of *gorods*.

It was the freemen, the free members of the community, who took part in the campaigns. They were that part of the population which is known to us under the term "*smerd*." This is tenable if only because it does not break with the preceding period, when the mass of the people constituted the army.

Compared with the period of "military democracy," the army underwent changes in two directions: it was being mustered as the circumstances demanded, and it lost its former "democratic nature," i.e., it was no longer consulted on general affairs and found itself subordinated to the state, headed by the prince and his nobles, rather than to its elective or partially hereditary chieftains. Henceforward the army was being gradually freed from those who were unskilled in the art of war and staffed with professionals who made up a nucleus of military experts. With the development of feudal relations in Rus, the *smerds* were partially replaced by feudal *druzhinas*.

I consider that the participation in the army of the rural population, the free members of the community, or whatever other name we use to designate them, has been proved.

The *voi*, apart from the villagers, also included the townsfolk. The report for 1016 in the *Novgorod Annals* quoted above makes it quite clear that the Novgorod townsfolk were a part of the Novgorod units which helped Yaroslav to capture Kiev and oust Svyatopolk. No one appears to have doubted that the townsfolk participated in the Ancient Rus army.

There are reports indicating that weapons were very expensive. That is why the Novgorod lower orders tried to procure money to arm the poor section of the Novgorod population during uprisings. The townsfolk had greater opportunities of procuring better weapons manufactured

by the city artisans. Unfortunately, the written sources give a one-sided picture of the army's equipment and mostly depict the princes and the nobles, without describing the army as a whole. The archaeological material has a similar failing. Weapons were placed only in the graves of professional warriors, i.e., the princes, the nobles and the men-at-arms. That is why we have to make use of the few scattered remarks in the sources.

It may be presumed *a priori* that the equipment of the Rus army in the period of the state of Ancient Rus was superior to the equipment of the preceding period. The princes, boyars and their men-at-arms unquestionably began to arm themselves better and with more varied and expensive weapons. But when the need arose for mustering large numbers of *voi*, the princes were unable to arm the latter as well as they themselves were armed or as they equipped their men-at-arms. In such cases the *voi* were given large numbers of old weapons.

There is a hint of this in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1151, a report which should not be taken in its literal sense, however. The Kievites told princes Vyacheslav, Izyaslav and Rostislav: "And let each one go, who is capable of handling a pole; but if some do not go, give it to us, so that we could use it in the fight."<sup>1</sup> A description of the Lipitsa battle of 1216 in the *Nikon Annals* says that they "struck at Yaroslav's footmen with axes and spears." It may well be that the axes were those the *smerds* used in their domestic labours. A miniature in the *Radziwill Chronicle* shows the insurgent *smerds* of 1071 bearing axes.

But this was only a part of the force. When foreign observers referred to the Rus army as early as the 9th century, they usually described it as having a large variety of excellent weapons. Thus, Ibn Ruste says that the Slavs of the 9th century had javelins and spears, and that their

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<sup>1</sup>*Ipaty Annals*, p. 300.



main weapon was the sword, while the princes wore coats of mail.<sup>1</sup>

Excavations of the Chernigov barrows have revealed a considerable variety of princely and boyar weapons, including swords, sabres, knives, spears, battle-axes, iron arrows, metal helmets, coats of mail and copper plates from forged shields.

Leo the Deacon in his paper on the Greco-Bulgarian-Russian war, in which Svyatoslav took part, describes the equipment of the Rus army in some detail.

He mentions swords and shields, and emphasizes the same feature of these shields noted by Mauricius 400 years previously: "Their shields ... are strong and long, going down to their feet, for greater protection." But Leo the Deacon does not regard their length as inconvenient. He even appears to approve of their use: "The Tauro-Scythians, having closed their shields and spears like a wall, awaited them (the Greeks—*Author*) on the field of battle."

He also mentioned javelins and long spears, armour, mail plate, arrows and stones hurled by catapult.<sup>2</sup>

The double-edged sword had for a long time been known among the Eastern Slavs. The chronicler's legend about the Khazar tribute contrasts the Rus sword to the Eastern sabre. The chronicler's story about an exchange of gifts between the Rus voivode Pretich and a Pecheneg prince to symbolize their friendship, is typical: "And they shook hands, and the Pecheneg prince gave Pretich a horse, a sabre and some arrows. In return Pretich gave him a coat of mail, a shield and a sword."<sup>3</sup> The Rus swore on their weapons to honour the treaties with the Greeks in 907, 911, 944 and 971. The 944 Treaty deciphers the term "weapons":

<sup>1</sup> D. Khvolson, *Ibn Dast's Reports on the Khazars, Burtasy, Bulgarians, Magyars, Slavs and Rus*, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> М. П. Погодин, Исследования, замечания и лекции, т. III, М. 1846, стр. 239—241. (M. P. Pogodin, *Investigations, Remarks and Lectures*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1846, pp. 239-41.)

<sup>3</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 65; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 48.

"And the unbaptized Rus place their shields and unsheathed swords, and wrist bands and other weapons." Elsewhere it says: "...And may they not shield themselves with their shields and be cut down by their own swords and struck down by their own arrows and other weapons."

These swords have been discovered by excavations in many places (Chernigov, Kiev, Smolensk, etc.). The story about Pretich underscores the national peculiarities of Rus and Turkic nomad equipment, but that does not mean that this distinction was sharp or that it was evident in every period of Rus relations with the steppe peoples. The *Lay of Igor's Host* mentions Eastern sabres as the most common weapons among the Rus warriors. A part of the weapons were brought from the West and the East. But the bulk of them were undoubtedly manufactured at home.<sup>1</sup>

The village *smerds* are always depicted as being foot soldiers. It is the princes and their men-at-arms, and possibly a part of the townsfolk who fought on horseback. The item for 1068 says that the Kiev people demanded of Prince Izyaslav: "Give us weapons and horses, prince, and we shall continue to fight them (the Polovtsy—*Author*)."

Large herds of horses were kept by the princes for military purposes. The *Ipaty Annals* for 1146 mention a herd of horses belonging to Princes Igor and Svyatoslav. It consisted of 3,000 mares and 1,000 stallions. It may be assumed that this was not the entire equestrian reserve of the princes. There are also earlier reports in the *Russkaya Pravda*, referring to the mid-11th century, which mention princely horses, stables and grooms. Cavalry units began to play a prominent part somewhat later. Svyatoslav's army had horses but fought on foot and, according to Leo the Deacon, was incapable of mounted action.

We must not pass by the question of the number of *voi*

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<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *Handicrafts in Ancient Rus*, pp. 223-28.



mustered by the princes for their military undertakings. It was repeatedly studied but has not, I think, yet been answered. Pogodin, for instance, is justifiably critical of the figures given in the sources. He is inclined to set the maximum figure for Svyatoslav's army in his Bulgarian campaign at 10,000. He thinks that this figure was never exceeded in the state of Ancient Rus.

Solovyov answers this question as regards the period of fragmentation. It is natural that individual principalities were unable to maintain as large armies as the prince was able to muster before Ancient Rus fell apart. Solovyov mentions the figure of 8,000, but estimates the joint forces of several principalities to have numbered anywhere from 20,000 to 50,000. The Novgorod region, Rostov with Belozero, the Murom and Ryazan regions could jointly raise 50,000 men. Incidentally, Great Novgorod, which was spared fragmentation, could muster 20,000<sup>1</sup> in the second half of the 12th century. Vladimirsky-Budanov suggests similar figures.<sup>2</sup>

Pogodin refers the reader to Chertkov's special study, which must have greatly gratified the extreme Normanist Pogodin, since both authors proceeded from figures of roving Norman bands. But their arguments are unacceptable.

To prove that Svyatoslav could not have had more than 10,000 warriors at the start of his Bulgarian campaign, Chertkov cites eighteen reports from the 9th-10th centuries about Norman raids on the coast of Europe. It transpires that these raids were carried out by insignificant forces, in groups of from 2, 3, 7, 12 and up to 200 boats. Chertkov reckons from 8 to 20 men per boat and thus arrives at a very small figure. His reasoning is often very weak. He doubts every one of the Russian and Byzantine sources and has complete confidence in West-European reports, without in any way explaining his preference. In 988, for instance, 3 Norman boats captured "many places

<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *op. cit.*, p. 989.

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

in East England and spread terror up to London itself."<sup>1</sup> In 820, 13 of their boats seized two islands opposite Poitou and devastated "the entire western part of France," etc.<sup>2</sup> These are second-hand reports but Chertkov makes no attempt either to check the facts or analyse them critically. It is true that he allows wide latitude in measuring the capacity of these boats. We can go a step further: the Russian chronicle places 40 men in Oleg's boat. Boplan (17th century) places as many as 50 or 70 men in a Cossack boat. Thus, even if we take the average of 20 men per boat it transpires that 60 men terrorized a part of England up to London, while 260 men devastated Western France. These figures are surely very dubious.

The Normans were undoubtedly notorious for their raiding skill, but these were raids which were successful because they were sudden and culminated in the speedy withdrawal of the well-armed and daring detachments.

All of the 18 facts adduced by Chertkov fail to explain the history of the military undertakings of the Kiev princes, since they were engaged in campaigns and not raids. These were dictated by the problems facing the state, and were organized very differently. They were intended to—and certainly did—have a different effect. Chertkov sees no difference between the two. He asserts that Svyatoslav's aim was "only plunder at an agreed price." He adds that it was only after his great success in Bulgaria that Svyatoslav slightly changed the aim of his campaign.<sup>3</sup>

The sources, however, refute this interpretation of Svyatoslav's campaign in Bulgaria. Byzantium induced Svyatoslav to undertake a campaign, and not a raid. It was intended to weaken Bulgaria. It will be recalled that, prior to this, the Emperor Nicephorus attempted to pene-

<sup>1</sup> А. Чертков, Описание войны великого князя Святослава Игоревича ("Русский исторический сборник", VI, 1843, стр 363). (A. Chertkov, *A Description of the War of Grand Prince Svyatoslav Igorevich*, *Russky Istorichesky Zbornik*, VI, 1843, p. 363.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 357.



trate into Bulgaria, but, fearful of the difficulties of the campaign, he decided "not to expose his warriors to the dangers of this impassable and suspicious territory." Instead, he preferred to send Kalokir to the "Tauro-Scythians," "whom we" (the Greeks—*Author*), writes Leo the Deacon, "usually call Rus, to seek their help in conquering Bulgaria." "It was impossible to induce the Taurians (Rus—*Author*) to leave Misia," a fact which we glean not only from the testimony of Leo the Deacon, but also from the talks held on the subject between Svyatoslav and the Byzantine Emperor, which resulted in the war between the two.

We learn of Svyatoslav's plans from the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. He not only wished to remain in Misia permanently, but also to transfer his capital to the banks of the Danube.<sup>1</sup> This does not look like a sudden landing by a few score or even hundred of seafarers who make off with their booty lest it be recaptured. It was a well-prepared campaign to the Danube, which was well known to the Slavs and the Antes as early as the 6th century.

It was no easy task to nullify Svyatoslav's successes. This was quite clear to the Byzantine Government. Leo the Deacon reports that Nicephorus Phocas was carefully preparing for the campaign against Svyatoslav. He intensified training in the army and took other emergency measures, but still had misgivings about victory. He began to fortify Constantinople, just in case Svyatoslav should attack the capital of the empire. In the midst of these large-scale preparations, Nicephorus fell victim to the plot of John Tzimiskes.

Nor did this latter, who unquestionably had military talent, dare to attack Svyatoslav. He made a futile at-

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<sup>1</sup> Svyatoslav's campaigns in the Caucasus are also well known, and Academician V. V. Bartold had every reason, quoting Arab sources, to say that the local population did not regard him as a robber, but as a new power which they felt it necessary to recognize. Nor was the destruction of the Khazar Kingdom a predatory act.

tempt to talk Svyatoslav into leaving Bulgaria. Meanwhile, the Rus army, having devastated Thrace, was moving towards the capital. Tzimisces, who had his hands full with the war in Asia Minor, sent magister Bardas Skliras with an army to meet Svyatoslav. The battle of Arcadiopole was, seemingly, not decisive, and Tzimisces had to send another army against Svyatoslav with instructions to winter in Thrace and Macedonia, where he promised to arrive himself with a big army the following spring.

Having quelled the uprising led by Bardas Phocas in Asia Minor, Tzimisces, finally, commenced the war against Svyatoslav. He sent a large fleet to the Danube to cut off Svyatoslav's army. Meanwhile, Greek diplomats were soliciting the sympathies and assistance of the Bulgarians. According to Leo the Deacon, Tzimisces had 15,000 foot and 13,000 horse, apart from the fleet. If we add to this the crews and the Bulgarian army we shall arrive at the figure of 50,000 to 60,000 men at the disposal of Tzimisces. Nevertheless, according to Leo the Deacon, Tzimisces considered the "victory" over Svyatoslav to have been gained "beyond every expectation" and only thanks to the miraculous intercession of St. Theodor.

It is thus, through an appraisal of the enemy forces which Leo the Deacon of course knew better than the Rus army, that we arrive at an approximation of the numerical strength of Svyatoslav's army. It could not have been substantially smaller than that of the Greeks. This makes the figure of 60,000, reported by Leo the Deacon, highly probable. He must have been aware also of the precise number of that part of the Rus army which, under the treaty with the Greeks, was allowed to return from Bulgaria and was supplied with food-stuffs by the Greeks. According to the treaty, the Greeks delivered corn for 22,000. Even if these figures, as all others pertaining to an estimation of the numerical strength of the army, are not absolutely exact, they are, nevertheless, not arbitrary, but are based on the testimony of one of the most competent



scholars of the time and are fully corroborated by the correlation of both forces.

Analysing other facts bearing upon the numerical strength of Rus forces in major campaigns in the Ancient Rus period (such as Vladimir's campaign against Korsun and his campaign to aid Emperor Vasily, when the Greek army mutinied against him), we can safely say, firstly, that these were neither gambles nor raids, but large-scale and well-organized campaigns, and, secondly, that they involved large military forces.

Vasilyevsky, in his paper entitled *The Varangian-Rus and the Varangian-English Men-at-Arms in Constantinople in the 11th and 12th Centuries*, examines the participation of Rus forces in the war between Emperor Vasily II and Bardas Phocas who was supported by practically the entire Byzantine army. He says that 6,000 of the Rus guards remained in the service of the Byzantine Emperor after his victory over Bardas Phocas. We do not know how many men there were in the Rus army that saved Vasily II from imminent ruin. One thing is clear, however—that there must have been incomparably more than 6,000 men, because it was impossible to defeat Bardas Phocas with a small force. Michael Psellus, Leo the Deacon's continuator, mentions "a considerable military detachment of the Tauro-Scythians who came to Vasily's assistance." Cedrenus and Zonaras tell us that this Rus force played the decisive role in the fighting. It could not have been small.

The Armenian scholar Stepanos Taronsky, a contemporary and a very accurate reporter, notes that the 6,000 were those "*whom King Vasily asked of the king of the Rus when he gave his sister in marriage to the latter.*"<sup>1</sup> This was, apparently, only a part of the Rus army which took part in quelling the rebellion of Bardas Phocas. Vasilyevsky is very cautious on the subject: "It is thus beyond doubt that a *big Russian military corps, at least 6,000 strong*, was

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<sup>1</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 200-01.

present in the Byzantine Empire from 988 until the first years of the 11th century."<sup>1</sup>

Vladimir would hardly have agreed to leave all the forces he had sent to Byzantium in the service of the Emperor. Substantially greater forces must have taken part in the campaign. Vladimir's campaign against Korsun, the six-month siege designed to isolate the fortress and, finally, the capture of the impregnable city also required many thousands of people. It is self-evident that a great people's army, in which the princely and boyar men-at-arms played the leading role, took part in all these and other great campaigns. I believe that we can also make use of later figures, suggested by Solovyov and Vladimirsky-Budanov.

Summing up the numerical strength of the armies in the areas which had previously been parts of Rus (even allowing that the separate principalities had to exert greater efforts when they acted on their own than when they were within a uniform state system) we arrive at figures reaching tens of thousands. These figures were already quoted above as being the most probable.

In order to solve its major international problems, the state of Ancient Rus had to have a large army. It was no longer the armed people of the "military democracy" period, because military democracy was a thing of the past. State power had become divorced from the people. Vast material resources fell into the hands of that power and enabled it to arm, at its own expense, those whom it mustered for its campaigns.

This is made clear by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* when it tells of how Vladimir Svyatoslavich discussed the feud and the wergild with his counsellors: "...And the bishops and the elders declared: 'Wars are frequent, and when wergild is collected let it be expended to procure weapons and horses.'"<sup>2</sup> Vladimir had to agree. In view of

<sup>1</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 124; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 87.



the growing military needs preference had to be given to a system of fines to replace the institution of the feud.

There is yet another item for 1068 corroborating this. After the defeat inflicted by the Polovtsy, "the Kievites ran to Kiev, and gathered for a *veche* in the market-place. Sending for the prince (Izyaslav Yaroslavich—*Author*) they declared: 'The Polovtsy have overrun the land; give us arms and horses, prince, and we shall continue to fight them.'"<sup>1</sup>

The princes must have had arms and horses in reserve. But these were not always sufficient. In certain cases, as we have seen, the princes urged the people, whom they mustered for war, to arm themselves as best they could. Under the circumstances the equipment could not be uniform for all the *voi*.

We are now entitled to draw the following conclusions about that part of the Kiev army which bore the name of *voi*:

1. There must have been a certain continuity in the military system of the period (before the formation of the early feudal state) when the people were an armed force, and the next, the state period.

2. The basic change in the military system of the early feudal state, as compared with the preceding period, was that the army ceased to be "an armed people" and was transformed into an instrument of state power.

3. The *voi* were not a standing army. They were mustered each time the need arose and in different numbers, depending on the circumstances.

4. The *voi* consisted of villagers (the bulk of whom were *smerds*), and townsfolk.

5. The state of Ancient Rus required large armed forces to cope with its major international problems. Tens of thousands of armed men were led by the princes and the boyars in the big campaigns.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lavrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 166; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 114.

6. In spite of the fact that the Kiev prince possessed large reserves of arms and horses for military purposes, these were often inadequate to arm the entire mass of *voi*. Sometimes, the townsfolk had to arm themselves at their own expense.

### The *Druzhina*

The earliest meaning of the term *druzhina*, as can still be seen in some Slavonic languages, is domestics, *chelyad*, and also the community in general, a union, an association.

The *Russkaya Pravda* contains traces of this ancient usage: "If the murderer is in their *verv* and is present, then, since he pays into the general fund, they are, therefore, obliged to help him or pay the wild *vira*; but together they shall pay only 40 *grivnas*, while the remuneration to the relatives of the one killed is to be paid by the murderer himself; to make up the 40 *grivnas* he has to pay his share from the *druzhina*."<sup>1</sup> In short, if the *verv* cannot find or deliver the murderer it has to pay the wergild jointly. In certain cases it may be paid in instalments. But the wergild is paid by the community as a whole, and every member of the *verv* contributes his share. That is what is called paying "one's share from the *druzhina*."

With time the *druzhina* ceases to mean domestics and *chelyad*. It comes to mean the court of a big landowner or boyar. It denotes a noble's menials, above all those who bear arms. Self-evidently, the *druzhina* could have acquired this latter meaning only with the appearance of those who could maintain it, i.e., with the emergence of the nobles from among the mass of freemen. The members of the *druzhina* are often called "servants."<sup>2</sup> But it is doubtful

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<sup>1</sup> *Extensive Pravda*, Art. 5.

<sup>2</sup> "Pyotr went to town, and he arrived at the prince's bailey, and then the prince's servants, all in black cloaks, came forward to meet him." *Ipaty Annals*, p. 319.



whether this term really included the *druzhina* as a whole. It did not apparently include the so-called "senior" *druzhina*.

As a rule, the *druzhina* is inseparable from its leader. It may be handed down from father to son, remaining, as it were, the property of the house, the family. In this respect it is altogether different from the *voi*, who are usually mustered *ad hoc*. The expressions used by the chroniclers are revealing: "And Oleg went and *took* many *voi*"; "Igor ... began to *gather* many *voi*"; Olga "*gathered* many *voi*"; Vladimir "*gathered* many *voi*"; Yaroslav "*assembled* many *voi*," etc.<sup>1</sup>

The army is raised from among the people as the occasion demands, while the *druzhina* is a standing body. It is never "gathered." It is always there at its leader's side. He consults it and campaigns with it. Of course, only a part—and a very small part—of the *druzhina* is in fact consulted.<sup>2</sup> The bulk of the *druzhina* are not counsellors of the prince and the nobles, but their comrades-in-arms.

Accounts by Caesar and Tacitus of the military system among the Germans are very indicative. In Caesar's time, the Germans did not as yet have any *druzhinas* in the precise meaning of the word: "...And when any of their chiefs has said in an assembly "that he will be their leader, let those who are willing to follow, give in their names," they who approve of both the enterprise and the man arise and promise their assistance and are applauded by the people."<sup>3</sup>

At that time the Germans lived under a pre-class sys-

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<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, pp. 22, 44, 56, 74, 140; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 20, 33, 42, 54, 97.

<sup>2</sup> This is proved by the conferences between the princes and their men-at-arms: two princes got together with their men-at-arms "in a single tent" on the shore of Lake Dolob. There were also not many conferences to revise the *Russkaya Pravda*.

<sup>3</sup> Caius Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War and Other Commentaries*, London, p. 123.

tem. The *principes* were tribal elders. They invited those of the free Germans who were willing to join in the campaign. Everyone who gave his consent lived entirely independent of the chieftain. It was a comradeship of military men set up for that particular undertaking. It was not yet a *druzhina*.

The existence of the *druzhin*as, which were then standing organizations under influential and wealthy people, was noted some 150 years later by Tacitus. The *druzhina* was maintained by the chieftain who acquired the necessary means by "plunder and war." "The men-at-arms expect from the bounty of their leader a steed, as well as a blood-stained victorious spear. Instead of payment they are feasted, abundantly, even if not refinedly." "There is a custom among German tribes," the author goes on to say, "whereby *all* voluntarily present their leaders with certain quantities of cattle and the fruits of the earth. This is accepted as an honorary gift but simultaneously serves to satisfy the needs (of the chieftain and his men-at-arms—*Author*). Every chieftain strives to have the best and most numerous troop."<sup>1</sup>

Many traces of the old social system were preserved in the German military organization and, in particular, in the status of the men-at-arms in the time of Tacitus, because the tribal system had not yet completely disappeared from German society in the 1st century A.D.

According to Tacitus, "...their towers and wedges (the horse and foot—*Author*) were not haphazard conglomerations of men, but were composed of families and gens, and their dear ones were near them and they heard the wails of their women and the cries of their infants. For each these were the most sacred witnesses and the most valued praisers. They go with their wounds to their mothers and wives, who are not afraid to count and tend them. It

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<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, cap. 13-15; Древние германцы. М. 1937, стр. 63-64 (*The Ancient Germans*, Moscow, 1937, pp. 63-64).



is they, too, who bring the warriors food and encourage them."<sup>1</sup>

All the accounts of Tacitus indicate that this was a society in which the state had not as yet made its appearance. It was a "military democracy" with a popular assembly, a council of elders, tribal notables and a supreme military leader who united the tribal groups.

The men-at-arms played a very conspicuous role in this process. They were transformed from temporary and private units into standing groups and comprised well-trained fighting personnel. They enhanced the power of their chieftains and assumed a prominent station in society.

The *History* of Ammianus Marcellinus which deals with events in the 4th century A.D. (353-378) gives a striking picture of the German troop. Their king, Hodonomar, surrendered to the Romans in the Battle of Strasburg, where the Alemans suffered a defeat. "200 men-at-arms (*comites*) and three of his closest friends, who considered it a shame to outlive the king or not to die for him, if the circumstances so demanded, also voluntarily allowed themselves to be put in irons."<sup>2</sup> We here find two groups in the *druzhina*: the *amici iunctissimi*, i.e., his closest aides and friends, and the *comites*—the rank-and-file men-at-arms.

The Mongols had a similar *druzhina* in Genghis Khan's time. The tribe was still in existence among them in spite of a number of signs indicating the existence of classes. The army was still organized on the gens principle as was the case among the Germans in the time of Tacitus. The members of a gens stood together in the ranks forming separate units. The khans had their own troops, the *nuks*, which in Mongolian means "friends." The men-at-arms lived together with their chieftains, were maintained by them and regarded as their domestics. They participated in campaigns together with their chieftains.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., cap. VII, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. XVI, § 60; *The Ancient Germans*, p. 177.

The khans' nobles had troops of their own.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Fadhlān reports that in the early 10th century the King of Bulgaria on the Volga had similar friends, called the *askhabs*.<sup>2</sup> This was beyond doubt his personal troop as distinct from the army, which was mustered as the occasion demanded.

These facts are so obvious that it is scarcely necessary to reiterate them.

Unfortunately, Russian documents do not enable us to trace the stages of this interesting process even to the extent that is possible regarding the Germans using the testimony of Caesar and Tacitus.

It is true that 6th-7th century Byzantine sources present a comprehensive picture of semi-patriarchal and semi-feudal relationships, but the *Russkaya Pravda*, the treaties with the Greeks, and the chronicles, beginning with the 9th century, deal with the time when the state had already been formed. By then the *druzhinas* had played their part in setting up princely power and strengthening the nobility around it politically. The *druzhinas* are a mature element in the political system of the early feudal state.

The existence of *druzhinas* under the Rus princes is supported by so many chronicler's accounts that it is absolutely self-evident. We have less information on the *druzhinas* of the Russian nobles in the 10th and 11th centuries, but there is sufficient evidence to prove that they were no less commonplace than the princely *druzhinas*. Consider, for example, Sveneld, one of the most powerful nobles, and capable of vying with his prince. His men-at-arms excelled those of the prince in apparel and equipment and aroused the envy of the latter: "...And Igor's *druzhina* said: 'Sveneld's men are rich in arms and apparel, but we are naked. Come, prince, let us go in search of trib-

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<sup>1</sup> B. Y. Vladimirtsov, *The Social System Among the Mongols* pp. 87-93 et al.

<sup>2</sup> Путешествие Ибн-Фадлана на Волгу. М.—Л. 1939, стр. 67. (*Ibn Fadhlān's Voyage to the Volga*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1939, p. 67.)



ute, so that you will profit and we too." Yan Vyshatich, who collected tribute in Beloozero for his Prince Svyatoslav and who quelled the *smerd* uprising of 1071, had his own men, his own troop.<sup>1</sup> Ratibor, a boyar of Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich, also had a *druzhina* of his own.<sup>2</sup> *The Life of Feodosy of Pechera* describes a boyar who raided the Pechera Monastery to take home his son who had run away to the cloister. At this point we should recall the well-established practice of sending representatives to Byzantium not only from the princes, but also from the distinguished noble families who played a part in ruling the country. "Ivor, son of Igor, (was the representative—*Author*) of the Rus Grand Prince; Vuefast, son of Svyatoslav—of Igor's son (i.e., Vuefast was the representative of Igor's son Svyatoslav—*Author*), Iskusevi—of Princess Olga, Sludy—of Igor, Igor's nephew, Uleb—of Vladislav (i.e., it was Vladislav who sent Uleb as his deputy—*Author*), Kanitsar—of Peredslava (i.e., Peredslava sent Kanitsar as her deputy—*Author*), etc."<sup>3</sup>

Who are these prominent and trustworthy people entrusted with such a responsible political mission? They are not relatives of those in authority. They are undoubtedly prominent members of their retinues, in short, men-at-arms. One practice of great interest was that the men-at-arms (all of them or only a part), following the death of the head of a large boyar family of this kind, remained in the same retinue and continued to serve the family, then headed by a woman.

This fact is well known from epic lore.<sup>4</sup> The Scandinavian sagas also tell of the existence of such *druzhinas* un-

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, pp. 53, 171; *Chronicle of Ancient Years* Part I, pp. 39, 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1891, pp. 198, 219.

<sup>3</sup> The 944 Treaty with the Greeks.

<sup>4</sup> "Hail, thou, Ivan Godinovich! Have a hundred men from me, the prince, mighty Russian *bogatyrs*, and another hundred from the princess." The saga of Olav, the son of Tryggves, contains a report that the wives of Rus princes kept half of the *druzhina* and received money from the treasury for its upkeep." (К. Невалин История российских

der the nobles in Rus. Ingigerda, Svyatoslav's bride, demanded that he give Ladoga and the surrounding area to her relative Ragnvald, who naturally went there with his men-at-arms. Ingigerda stipulated that Ragnvald's station and authority in Rus were to be similar to those he enjoyed at home. The Eymundar Saga describes Eymund as a leader of men-at-arms whom he calls "my men," and on whose behalf he signs a treaty with Yaroslav.<sup>1</sup> Eymund and his men-at-arms joined Yaroslav in several battles.

Finally, the *Russkaya Pravda*, sums up valuable data on the subject. Unfortunately, the article concerned allows several readings which give different shades of meaning to the law.

This is Art. 91 of the *Extensive Pravda*, entitled "About the Boyar and *Druzhina* Inheritance." It says: "If (any one dies) among the boyars or *druzhina*, the inheritance shall not go to the prince, but if there are no sons, it shall be taken by the daughters." (The First Troitsk Copy.) The Second Archaeographic Copy has a different title: "About the Boyar or *Lyudi* Inheritance." In the Pushkin Copy the beginning of the text: "And if (any one dies) among the boyars or *druzhina* ..." is rendered as follows: "And if (any one dies) among the boyar *druzhina* ..."

The general meaning of the article can be fully understood only in comparison with Art. 90, entitled "And If a *Smerd* Dies." It reads: "And if a *smerd* dies without male heirs" (the Pushkin Copy), the "inheritance goes to the prince, and if he have daughters at home, they shall be given a part, and if they are married, they shall be given no part."<sup>2</sup> Nikolsky and Presnyakov noted the "negative

гражданских законов, т. I, СПб 1851, стр. 109—110, примечание 292. (K. Nevolin, *A History of Russian Civil Law*, Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1851, pp. 109-10, Note 292.)

<sup>1</sup> А. И. Лященко, "Eymundar Saga" и русские летописи. Известия Академии наук СССР, № 12, серия VI, т. XX, 1926, стр. 1070, 1071 и др. (A. I. Lyashchenko, *The Eymundar Saga and the Russian Chronicles*. *Izvestia Akademii Nayk SSSR*, No 12, Series VI, Vol. XX, 1926, pp. 1070, 1071 et al.)

<sup>2</sup> *Russkaya Pravda*, Textbook, pp. 28-29.



form of the article on the boyar and *druzhina* inheritance," which, according to Presnyakov, "gives the impression that it was written to repeal a common practice when the property of the man-at-arms reverted to the prince in the absence of sons. The former practice is in this way alleviated in favour of the daughters, who thus became heirs." The prince's right to *smerds'* inheritance involved only the princely *smerds* who inhabited the princely lands.<sup>1</sup>

Nikolsky and Presnyakov are right. There was undoubtedly a period in the history of the *druzhina* when it was kept by the prince and was granted land as a benefice, i.e., for life. It is quite clear that under the circumstances the man-at-arms had no right to inherit. However, after the man-at-arms consolidated his position on the land and the benefice became a fee, the old law must have been repealed. The *Extensive Pravda* of the early 12th century records this change which had occurred earlier. The growth of the economic independence of the men-at-arms is a fact which was noted a long time ago by our scholars.

Thus far, the status of the dependent *smerds* remained unchanged. In the Galich land it was changed in the middle of the 14th century. The *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy* hints at a certain initial similarity between the status of the princely *smerds* and that of the men-at-arms: "If a *smerd* is tortured without the prince's orders, a fine of three *grivnas* shall be paid and for an *ognishchanin* and the *tiun* and the *mechnik*<sup>2</sup>—12 *grivnas*." (Art. 33.)

Considerable changes must have taken place in the economic and political life of the country for the status of the *druzhina* to have undergone such a complete change (see Part. V). We shall have to examine the composition of the early *druzhina* more closely.

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. 1, p. 188. V. Nikolsky, *The Principles Underlying the Study of Ancient Rus Law*, p. 364. I fully agree with Yushkov's opinion on the subject. (S. V. Yushkov, *Essays the History of Feudalism in Kiev on Rus*, p. 156.)

<sup>2</sup> *Mechnik*—a swordsman.—Tr.

One is struck by its heterogeneous nature. The pertinent terminology of the sources is of some interest. The term *druzhina* is qualified as great, the most beautiful, the best, the foremost, the senior and the junior. Besides, the sources use a number of words to denote the *druzhina* or a part thereof, namely, *chad*, *grid*, *gridba*, *otroks*, *detskiye*, *dvoryane*, servants, *muzhi* and princely *muzhi*, boyars. These alone indicate the existence of various groups in the *druzhina* and partially reveal their purpose.

This problem has been studied by our scholars at length. I shall therefore adduce only those general conclusions which appear to be completely substantiated.

The senior (*stareishaya*) *druzhina* is in fact the senior in every sense of the word. For the most part it is those men-at-arms who gained glory and rose to eminence while serving their princes and boyars, or their fathers. They were expert in war and good counsellors, and their opinion is highly valued. They are known by a distinct name—the boyars or *muzhi* (princely *muzhi*, if they are the prince's men-at-arms). There may well have been some hierarchical difference between the boyar and the *muzh*. At all events, both these groups constituted an exclusive group within the *druzhina*, in contrast to the more modest, junior *druzhina*, which is more numerous and differs from the former in age, merit and duties. It consists of *otroks* and *detskiye* who bear special names—the *mechniks*, the *metalniki*,<sup>1</sup> etc.—depending on their functions.

There was a great military difference between the senior and junior men-at-arms. The juniors were rank-and-file warriors, forming the bulk of the permanent *druzhina*. The seniors were experienced leaders, usually promoted from the junior men-at-arms. The men in command of the *voi* were usually picked from among the senior men-at-arms, the boyars and the *muzhi*. Vyshata, Budy, Blud, Sveneld, Pretich, Pereneg, Nikifor, Mikula, Chudin, etc., were all

<sup>1</sup> *Metalnik*—derivative of *metati*—to hurl, throw.—Tr.



princely *muzhi*, boyars, and the prince's senior men-at-arms. It was they who, as voivodes,<sup>1</sup> i.e., the leaders of the *voi*, led the recruits.

They were also the counsellors of the prince as members of the prince's retinue, without whom he adopted no important decisions. They were examined in the chapter, entitled "The Prince and the Kiev Nobility."

Beginning as members of a princely or boyar escort kept by their masters, the men-at-arms gradually became land-owners, who held their land, first as a benefice, and then as a fee. This development is attended by corresponding changes in their political status. This in brief was the history of the *druzhina*.

The increased economic and political importance of the nobility enabled it to assume a position independent of the central authority in the state of Ancient Rus and eventually to oppose that authority and pave the way for the fragmentation of the state into separate feudal principalities each headed by a prince.

The *druzhinas* played a decisive role in this strengthening of the Kiev boyars and the junior members of the Kiev princely house. That part of the *druzhina* which settled on the land ceased to differ from the local boyars who had grown up on the land with the consolidation and expansion of private land tenure. The boyars, whatever their origin, became a ruling class of big feudal lords. They became seigniors holding their military servants (*posluzhiltsy*<sup>2</sup>) as vassals, who replaced the men-at-arms.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Voditi*—to lead.—*Tr.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sluzhiti*—to serve.—*Tr.*

<sup>3</sup> Yushkov has recently considered this question. (S. V. Yushkov, op. cit., pp. 31-33, 144-50 et al.) His basic conclusions appear to be acceptable. I would only disagree with him in his use of the term *nabor* (recruitment—*Tr.*) to denote the replenishment of the ranks of the men-at-arms. The *druzhina* were not recruited, as were the *voi*, but complemented by the sons of the old members of the *druzhina* or by the admission of new people whom the prince or the boyars needed, and who in turn strove to become members of the princely or boyar retinue. Such was the case of Anbal, the steward, who had charge of Andrei Bogo-

Military terminology was uniform throughout Rus, but it had its peculiarities in Novgorod. It is there that we find the terms *grid*, *gridba* (*Novgorod Annals* and the *Brief Russkaya Pravda*). The words *gridnitsa* and *grid* found their way to Kiev with the Novgorod Prince, Vladimir Svyatoslavich, but we find them used only once in connection with the story about Vladimir's feasts. This story may well have been compiled on the basis of Novgorod legends.

In the earliest *Russkaya Pravda*, written for Novgorod, we find: "... either it be a Rusin, or a *gridin*, or a merchant." The *First Novgorod Annals* say of Vladimir's feasts: "... and those who are to come include the boyars, and the *grid*, and the centurions and the decurions and the noble *muzhi*..." (*Yaroslav's Church Statutes* use the term "*gorod* people" instead of the "*noble muzhi*"). The same chronicle uses a stock phrase to denote the upper crust of Novgorod society: "... *ognishchane*, *grid*, the bigger merchants" (1166); "*ognishchane* and *gridba* and merchants" (1195); "*ognishchane* and *gridba* and whosoever is a buyer and a merchant" (1234). In this formula, as in the previous ones, the merchants invariably occupy third place and the *grid*—second place, without exception. First place is set aside for those who are called either Rus, boyars, or *ognishchane*—all terms used in Novgorod to denote the wealthiest, noblest and most influential people.

By the 12th and 13th centuries the term *grid* apparently came to be used in Novgorod to denote not only the men-at-arms in the narrow sense of the word, i.e., the armed servants of the princes and boyars, but also that part of the landowners who emerged from a fusion of the men-at-arms settled on the land with landowners who had never served in any *druzhina*. It may be safely said that when

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lubsky's household. Kuzmishchie, a faithful servant of the prince, tells him: "... Do you remember ... what you wore when you *came* here? Today you are dressed in silk and the prince lies naked. ..." Anbal came of his own accord and apparently applied for a position with the prince. He was not "recruited."



this term was finally abandoned even in Novgorod, it was replaced by another purely Russian one, the *zhityi* people, who continued to be an intermediary group between the boyars and the merchants.

### Auxiliary Forces

Apart from the *voi* and the *druzhina*, the armed forces of the Kiev princes included hired units and troops. Varangian men-at-arms—warlike Scandinavian detachments led by their chieftains—were hired to strengthen the army, as well as bands of Turkic nomads. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* has a number of reports concerning the hiring of Varangian men-at-arms. It tells of the Varangians invited to take part in big campaigns by Igor, Oleg, Vladimir and Yaroslav (according to the chronicle, Svyatoslav did not apply to the Varangians). The *Eymundar Saga* gives a very vivid picture of negotiations between Prince Yaroslav and the Varangian men-at-arms.

This was a difficult period for Yaroslav, who was engaged in a struggle with his brother Svyatopolk the Damned. The latter was in league with the Polish ruler, King Boleslav, and the Pechenegs. Eymund and his Varangian men-at-arms who were prepared to serve any prince as long as they were paid, offered timely aid to Yaroslav. The latter replied: "...We very much need your men-at-arms and your efficiency, because you are brave Norse men. But I do not know the payment you require for your services." Eymund replied: "First of all, you shall grant us something to take *home*, for me and my men, and shall not refuse us anything from your best supplies of which we may have need." "I am agreeable to this keep," Yaroslav said. Then Eymund added: "You are also to pay every one of our warriors an ounce of silver, and a further half ounce to every commander."

This was apparently too high a price and Yaroslav refused. Eymund then offered a compromise: "Instead of the

silver—beaver and sable skins and other goods which abound here, in your land. Their value shall be estimated by us and not by your warriors. And if there be booty you can grant us pfennigs. If we are idle you shall grant us less goods." With these stipulations the agreement was concluded for a period of 12 months. When the term expired, Eymund said to Yaroslav: "We have lived in your possessions for some time, king; now choose whether our agreement shall stand or do you wish to destroy your comradeship (agreement—*Author*) with us, and we shall have to look for another leader, because the payment of pfennigs was slow." "I think that I do not need your men as I did before," Yaroslav said. "It is too great an expenditure of wealth for us to pay you the price you demand." Eymund reminded Yaroslav that his chief enemy Svyatopolk was still alive, and Yaroslav then agreed to extend the agreement for another year. When that term expired, Eymund concluded an agreement with Bryachislav of Polotsk, one of Yaroslav's enemies.

We do not know for certain how many men-at-arms Eymund had. But there is indirect evidence that they were not very numerous. Under the treaty a keep was built for them in Novgorod. *Eymundar Saga* says that it was made of stone (which is very doubtful) and upholstered with red cloth. This fact is supported by an item in the *Chronicle* for 1015, which tells how the Novgorodites resented the behaviour of the Varangian men-at-arms and destroyed them. "When Vladimir wished to go against Yaroslav (after Yaroslav and the Novgorod boyars had refused to pay tribute to Kiev), the latter, who feared his father, sent beyond the seas and brought the Varangians." These Varangians, who remained idle in Novgorod, "treated the Novgorodites and their wives with violence. The Novgorodites rose up and *destroyed the Varangians in Paramon's bailey*." The hired Varangian detachment was destroyed in a single bailey, apparently the same building, or one very



similar to it, concerning which we learn such curious details from the *Eymundar Saga*.

But their numerical strength is not the point at issue. When the Rus princes enlisted the services of the Varangian men-at-arms on certain conditions, they regarded them as an auxiliary military force—which, however, was composed of people skilled in the arts of war.

There is another important aspect to this problem. Only the Novgorod princes—Igor, Oleg, Vladimir and Yaroslav—enlisted the services of these auxiliary detachments. Kiev never invited any Varangians, and Svyatoslav never sought the aid of the Varangians in any of his big campaigns.

The practice of inviting auxiliary Varangian troops was discontinued in Novgorod under Yaroslav. While Novgorod occasionally invited Scandinavian detachments, Kiev, under similar circumstances, had resort to the Turkic peoples.

When Igor's army was on its way to Byzantium in 944, the Bulgarians, as their duty demanded, reported to the Byzantine Emperor Roman: "The Rus are coming and they have hired the Pechenegs."<sup>1</sup> Apparently Rus did not greatly trust these mercenaries, because Igor, as the chronicler reports, took hostages from among them.<sup>2</sup> In his struggle against Yaroslav, Svyatopolk the Damned allied himself with the Pechenegs. It is impossible to say for sure whether the Pechenegs in this case were mercenaries or allies.<sup>3</sup> I am inclined to assume the former.

When Vasilyok, Prince of Terebovl, was preparing to attack Poland, he invited the Berendeis, the Pechenegs and the Torks. Here, too, we do not know on what conditions these Turkic military units joined the Rus prince in his campaign.

<sup>1</sup> *Lavrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 45; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> "And took hostages from them." (*Lavrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 44; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 34.)

<sup>3</sup> *Lavrenty Annals*, 1897, pp. 138-40; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, pp. 96-97.

It is noteworthy that the participation of Turkic auxiliary units was such a frequent occurrence that it far surpasses the number of invitations extended by the Novgorodites to the Varangians.

There is every reason to presume that the Rus princes obtained this assistance either by arranging joint military undertakings, by hiring auxiliaries, or by settling the nomads on Rus borders under certain conditions, namely, as federates.

Kiev Rus made use of nomad military detachments from among those with whom our South had maintained uninterrupted intercourse for several centuries.

There is a revealing fact in the *Ipaty Annals* for 1116: "All summer the Polovtsy fought with the Torks and Pechenegs, on the Don, and there was a battle which lasted two days and two nights and the Torks and Pechenegs came to Vladimir in Rus." In other words, defeated by the Polovtsy, the Torks and Pechenegs sought refuge with Vladimir Monomakh. Another item for 1121 says: "Vladimir expelled the Berendeis from Rus, while the Torks and the Pechenegs fled of their own accord." The same event is described somewhat differently in the *Laurenty Annals*: "That same year (1120) the Torks and Berendeis fled from the Rus land; they ran hither and thither and thus perished."

These reports make it clear that only the military detachments fought the Polovtsy in 1116, and not all the Berendeis, Torks and Pechenegs. Defeated by the Polovtsy, the military detachments (with their cattle, kibitkas, wives and children, as Turkic hordes usually moved), could not settle on Rus soil without the permission of the Kiev Prince Vladimir Monomakh who, in this case, was scarcely prompted by charitable motives and gave them permission to settle on certain conditions profitable to himself.

The Torks and the Berendeis were most probably settled in border regions as federates, on the understanding that



they would defend the Russian frontiers. This is also indicated by the fact that the Berendeis were driven out of Rus five years after they had settled on its soil. One feels the same resolute hand allowing and forbidding, inviting and expelling. The decisive role was played by Monomakh. He considered it useful to conclude an agreement with the nomadic Berendei, Tork and Pecheneg detachments and settled them on his borders.

It would appear that the violation of the agreement by the federates forced Monomakh to expel the Berendeis, while the Torks and the Pechenegs, who found themselves in similar circumstances, decided not to await expulsion and left of their own accord.

But it seems that cases of expulsion were extremely rare. There is abundant proof indicating that the nomads, particularly the Berendeis and the Torks, settled for good in Ancient Rus.

This is very clearly indicated by the toponymy. We find the following names: in the Chernigov land Pechenyugi in Novgorod-Seversky *uyezd*; Pcheniki in Starodub *uyezd*; in the Kharkov land Pechenegi in Chuguyev *uyezd*; Pechenega Hill near Chuguyev, Torchinovo stronghold in Bogodukhov *uyezd*, the village of Torskoye in Kupyansk *uyezd*; in the Kiev land the settlement of Torch in Kiev *uyezd*, Torchin and the rivulet Torchanka, a tributary of the Usha in Radoslavl *uyezd*, Torchitsa on the River Torchitsa, the village of Torchevsky Stepak in Tarashcha *uyezd*, the River Torcha, a tributary of the Tikich, Torchitskoye Hills, the villages of Velikoye and Maloye Polovetskoye in Vasilkov *uyezd*, Kumanovka and Berendichev (now Berdichev), Pechenezhets near Rosava; in the Volyn land Torchin in Lutsk *uyezd*, the village of Polovetskoye in Zhitomir *uyezd*; the village of Polovtsy near Brest; the village of Torchitsy in Chernaya Rus; in Podolia Torchin, Kumanivtsy, Kumanov, Kumanyevka in Lipetsk *uyezd*, Torkov in Braslav *uyezd*; in the Galich land Berendovichy and Torki in Peremyshl district, Pechenezhin in Kolomiya

*posad*; Pechenegi grave near Zvenigorod; Polovtsy in Chortkov *posad*; the settlement of Polovets near Manovets, Torki in Sokal *posad*, Torchinovichi in Sambor *posad*, Kumanyev in Tishanevsky *posad*.

All these names are widespread in the border forest-steppe region with very few of them in the forest area; the nomads settled on Rus's outskirts naturally preferring the steppe to the forest.

The *gorod* of Torchesk in the Ros area played a major role in the history of the clashes between the princes of the appanage period. It was a centre to which other Turkic settlements gravitated. It is there that we discover, in the late 12th century, Konduvdy, the "Torchesk prince." He was arrested by Svyatoslav Vsevolodovich on trumped-up charges. Other Rus princes interceded in his behalf describing him as a courageous man who was useful to Rus. Offended by Svyatoslav, Konduvdy incited the Polovtsy against Rus. A year later Konduvdy entered the services of Ryurik, another Rus prince, who gave him the *gorod* of Dveren on the Ros, "for the sake of the Russian land," i.e., with the stipulation that he defend the Russian land.

The *Ipaty Annals* clearly speak of the service relations between the "black hoods," (a collective term for nomad horsemen) and the Rus princes.

In 1151, the "black hoods" addressed princes Vyacheslav, Izyaslav and Rostislav as follows: "We want to lay down our lives for your father Vyacheslav, or for thee, or for thy brother Rostislav and all your brethren. And we shall gain honour for you, and if not, we shall die here with you, but we do not want to have Yury." Another item for 1155 says the same thing: the Polovtsy came up to Kanev where Yury Dolgoruky then was, and asked him to order the Berendeis to release the Polovtsy prisoners. Yury could do nothing for them, because the Berendeis stated flatly: "We die for the Rus land with your son, and perish for thy honour."



It is quite evident that the Berendeis were engaged by Yury on certain conditions. The Polovtsy appealed to Yury rather than to the Berendeis, who helped Rus to defend her frontiers. But the limits of Yury's power over the Berendeis were also specified. One of the provisions of their agreement was the federates' right to war booty. Yury, as the chronicler observes, "did not treat them with violence."

The same chronicle for 1159 reports an interesting incident when the Berendei leaders—Tudor Satmazovich, Karakoz Mnyuzovich and Karas Kokei—found it profitable to leave the services of one prince (Izyaslav) and join another (Mstislav). They sent envoys to Mstislav saying: "If you want to be friends with us, as your father had been, and will give us a fine *gorod* each, we shall then leave Izyaslav." Mstislav agreed and, it would seem, gave them each a fine *gorod*, undoubtedly along the Ros where all these nomad horsemen were settled.

The *Ipaty Annals* for 1177 report the seizure by the Polovtsy of "six Berendei *gorods*." There are no grounds for asserting that these are the same *gorods* which Mstislav gave the Berendeis, but the fact that the chronicle mentions Berendei *gorods* is highly indicative. Being settled on Rus territory, the nomads undoubtedly changed their nomadic way of life and gradually became a part of the Russian society and state. They became, as the chronicler puts it, "ours."<sup>1</sup>

All these people settled as federates formed "regiments,"<sup>2</sup> i.e., they were organized as military units.

The age-long existence of the two peoples very natu-

<sup>1</sup> "David had many of his men-at-arms in the *gorod*. ... And Prince Gleb sent his millenary Grigory with aid, and wild Polovtsy, Konchak and his tribe, and his own Berendeis, Basteyev's *chad*." "The wild Polovtsy" are contrasted with Rus's "own Berendeis." Basteyev's *chad* is again mentioned in 1170 and 1171. "Izyaslav returned to Chernigov, mustering his forces . . . and gathering all the *regiments* of his Berendeis. . . ." (*Ipaty Annals*, pp. 375, 254.)

<sup>2</sup> "... At this time all the 'black hoods' came to him (Prince Gleb—*Author*) with all their *regiments* greatly rejoicing." (*Ipaty Annals*, p. 276.)

rally bred similarity of interests. Eventually, we find the "black hoods" playing a most active part in the political life of the Russian land, which became their adopted motherland. Rostislav, the son of Yury Dolgoruky, after his unsuccessful service with Grand Prince Izyaslav, said to his father in 1149: "I have heard that you are favoured by all the Rus land, and also by the black hoods."<sup>1</sup> The death of the Kiev Prince Izyaslav was bewailed by "all the Rus land and all the black hoods." When Rostislav Mstislavich (Vladimir Monomakh's grandson) ascended the Kiev throne, "he was welcomed by everyone, and by the entire Rus land, and all the black hoods rejoiced."<sup>2</sup> After the death of Rostislav, the Kievites and the "black hoods" invited Mstislav. There are many such examples.

It is quite clear that the "black hoods" were very closely associated with Rus.

Although most of the striking facts about the Pechenegs, the Torks, the Berendeis and other Turkic peoples, to whom the chronicle at times refers using the general term "black hoods," relate to the period of feudal fragmentation, i.e., not directly to the period of Ancient Rus, they, nevertheless, help us to understand to some extent their status in the state of Ancient Rus.

The ties linking the Eastern Slavs and the Turkic nomads were of long standing. The Rus written sources refer to events which are of considerable antiquity. The Torks, for instance, are first mentioned by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* in 985, when Vladimir Svyatoslavich and his uncle Dobrynya launched a campaign against the Volga Bulgars. The Torks accompanied them. Characteristically, the chronicle reports: "while the Torks went along the shore on horseback." Thus, Vladimir's army, which was on foot, according to the practice of the day, included the Torks as cavalry. Since they were under the command of

<sup>1</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, pp. 262, 323, 324.

<sup>2</sup> "... The Kievites sent their envoys, and the black hoods sent theirs." (*Ipaty Annals*, p. 365.)



Vladimir himself it may be naturally presumed that they were a part of the Kiev army. The report in question does not state that that particular campaign was the first jointly undertaken by the Rus and the Torks.

Torchesk is first mentioned as a *gorod* in the Ros area in 1085. But we should be justified in assuming that it existed earlier, and possibly arose in connection with large-scale fortification works on the southern borders of the state.

The Pechenegs are first mentioned as enemies in the *Chronicle* for 915. It may be presumed that the Torks were the first to establish treaty relations with Rus. The Torks and the Berendeis helped Rus to beat back the Pechenegs, much the same as the latter themselves, together with the Torks and the Berendeis, who came to help Rus to repulse the Polovtsy somewhat later.

The relationships we discover in the 11th and 12th centuries must inevitably have had a history. In 944, the Pechenegs, as we have seen, were part of the Rus army in Igor's campaign against the Greeks. Such a long and close military co-operation between Rus and the nomadic peoples was not only a quantitative factor, in that it served to enlarge the Rus military forces. It was also a qualitative factor. The Tork auxiliary detachments were mounted, and their arms came from Asia.<sup>1</sup> I leave aside this aspect of the matter, wishing only to stress that the historian should bear in mind that the equipment of the Rus army, considering its antiquity and unique nature, henceforward developed under the impact of peaceful and military relationships with Byzantium, the East and the West. The history of the Eastern Slavs is much more complicated than experts who do not wish to take the trouble to delve into that remote past are wont to imagine. But Kiev

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<sup>1</sup> An example from the *Ipaty Annals* for 1146: "... The Berendeis attacked the regiment from the rear with their sabres, and began to cut them down. . . .", p. 232.

Rus cannot be understood unless all these complex phenomena are taken into account.

Here are my main conclusions:

1. The military system of Kiev Rus was a result of the age-long development of the Eastern Slavs.

2. The written sources make it possible to reconstruct to a large extent the military system in the period of "military democracy," the period when the state of Ancient Rus was taking shape and the period of feudal fragmentation.

3. The foundations of Ancient Rus's military system were laid in the period of "military democracy," when the army and the people were one, when the armed people constituted the army.

4. With the emergence of the state, i.e., with the divorcement of power from the people, the army became a part of the government apparatus without, however, losing many of its earlier features. As before, the army was the people, but not the entire people, and only that part of it which was mustered as the occasion demanded and in numbers determined by the scale and scope of a given military undertaking. It was partially armed by the state. The people's army was disbanded when it was no longer needed.

5. The major tasks facing the state of Ancient Rus made the Kiev princes gather large armed forces.

6. The wealthy and noble people organized *druzhinas* which helped them to strengthen their economic and political might.

7. There is a growth of large-scale land tenure, the benefice and lien systems.

8. The Ancient Rus army, apart from the *voi* and the *druzhinas*, included Varangian and (much more frequently) Turkic auxiliary detachments which were invited on various conditions.

9. Varangian armed detachments were hired by Novgorod.

10. Kiev did not invite any Varangians. It used the serv-



ices of the nomadic peoples of the East, who came into contact with Rus at a very early date.

11. The nomads were admitted by the Kiev prince either as hired military detachments or as federates settled on Rus's borders for their defence.

12. It is impossible to get a correct understanding of Rus army history during the earliest period without taking these non-Russian military elements into consideration.

#### 4. REMARKS ON THE ANCIENT RUS *VECHE*

There is little reason to discuss the *veche* in a book on the state of Ancient Rus, since the *veche*, strictly speaking, did not function in that state. The *veche* flourished in the period of feudal fragmentation. It is only towards the close of the Ancient Rus period that we find *veche* meetings in some cities—an indication of the growth of the cities, which were about to rid themselves of the Grand Prince's control.

There is one fact, however, which serves to justify the present chapter: studies of the *veche* do not always draw a dividing line between two periods in our history—the period of the state of Ancient Rus, when the *veche* was silent, and the period of feudal fragmentation, when it raised its voice—at times very loudly. I believe that a few remarks on the Ancient Rus *veche* will show the relationship and interdependence of these two periods which are quite distinct. But these remarks are mere addenda to the chapters dealing with Ancient Rus's political system.

Much has been written about the Ancient Rus *veche*. It may even be said that not a single student of Ancient Rus has ignored the institution. There are also a number of special papers on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See С. М. Шпилевский, Об участии земщины в делах правления до Иоанна IV („Юридический журнал“, № 5, отд. II., 1861). (S. M. Shpilevsky, *The Participation of the Zemstvo in Administration Prior to Ioann IV*, *Yuridichesky Zhurnal*, No. 5, Section II, 1861.) В. Дьячан,

The most voluminous and comprehensive paper on this subject by Sergeyevich, which rightly held first place among pre-revolutionary studies, indicated many aspects of the matter which require additional investigation.

I do not intend to review the problem in its entirety. I merely wish to consider the periodization of the history of the institution. This is of great importance in determining the nature of the state of Ancient Rus.

Sergeyevich presumes the *veche* to have existed throughout our entire early history up to the Tatars. Quoting the well-known text of the *Laurenty Annals* for 1176 ("The Novgorodites from the earliest times, and the people of Smolensk, and Kiev, and Polotsk and the folk of all other regions assemble in *veche* as in counsel...") and other reports in the chronicles, he flatly declares: "Thus, in the opinion of the first chronicler as well as a later one who lived at the end of the 12th century, the *veche* had always existed." In order to substantiate this thesis, which he accepts, with facts, he goes on to say: "But we are in a po-

Участие народа в верховной власти до изменения их государственного устройства в XIV и XV веках, Варшава 1882. (V. Dyachan, *The Participation of the People in the Government in Slavonic States Prior to Changes in Their State Systems in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, Warsaw, 1882.) А. Лимберт, Предметы ведомства "вече" в княжеский период древней России. (A. Limbert, *The Jurisdiction of the Veche in the Princely Period of Ancient Russia*, Warsaw, 1877.) V. I. Sergeyevich, *Veche and Prince*, 1867; also his *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. II; also his Первичные народные собрания у германцев и греков (*Primitive People's Assemblies Among the Germans and the Greeks*, Zhurnal Ministerstva Yustitsii, X, 1907). И. А. Линниченко, Вече в Киевской области. (I. A. Linnichenko, *The Veche in Kiev Region*, Kiev, 1881.) М. В. Довнар-Запольский, Вече (M. V. Dovnar-Zapolsky, *The Veche*, Russian History in Essays and Articles, edited by Dovnar-Zapolsky, Vol. I, pp. 226-247). М. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, the chapter on the *veche* and Addenda to Part I, "О законных и незаконных вечевых собраниях" ("Legal and Illegal Veche Assemblies"), "Об отношении пригородного вече к вечу старшего города" ("The Relationship Between the Suburban Veche and the Veche of the Leading City"). Ф. В. Тарановский, Отзывы о сочинении В. И. Сергеевича "Древности русского права" (F. V. Taranovsky, *Comments on Sergeyevich's Paper "Russian Juridical Antiquities"*), Yuriev, 1911, pp. 45-68. S. V. Yushkov, op. cit., pp. 35-36, 193 et seq. M. N. Tikhomirov, *The Towns of Ancient Rus*, Moscow, 1946, pp. 215-20.



sition to cite official 10th-century documents testifying to the people's participation in political affairs of the time. These are Oleg's and Igor's treaties with the Greeks. The first treaty was concluded not only on behalf of the prince, but 'also (on behalf) of all those Rus who are under him' (911). To conclude the second treaty envoys were sent on behalf of 'all the people of the Rus land.'<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere he makes a similar sweeping statement: "The *veche* as a phenomenon of common law existed from time immemorial."<sup>1</sup> To prove this he quotes the expression "from time immemorial" used by the *Lavrenty Annals*, as well as the decision of the Polyane, who had purportedly "decided in common" to pay the Khazars a sword per household, the behaviour of the Drevlyane in their negotiations with Princess Olga, the siege of Belgorod by the Pechenegs, etc.

Sergeyevich describes the *veche* as existing in Ancient Rus intermittently. It is only the Tatar conquest, he believes, that makes a gap in the history of the *veche*. "The Tatar conquest," he writes, "was an event of paramount importance which paved the way for a new order of things.... The invasion of the Tatars serves to acquaint the Russian principalities with a power which stands for no compromise but must be obeyed unconditionally. The basis for the *veche*'s development was at once destroyed."<sup>2</sup> This is a very important problem and requires closer examination.

A new approach is evident in later studies which appeared after Sergeyevich's book, *Veche and Prince*. Thus, Vladimirsky-Budanov divides the history of the *veche* into several "epochs." One gathers this from the titles in his paper, namely: "The Origin and the First Epoch in the History of the People's Assemblies," "The Second Epoch in the Development of People's Assemblies," "The Third Epoch of *Veche* Assemblies." So-called "tribal meetings" are held in the first period, which lasts from the 6th to

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 33. (Italics mine.—*Author*.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

the 9th century. The second period (the 9th and 10th centuries) is a transition period from the tribal meeting to the urban, when "the best people from the entire land gather at the leading city to settle their affairs and debate the business of the *zemstvo* in the presence of the citizens of that city." The third period (between the 11th and the 13th centuries) "is an epoch in which this form of power emerges as an independent force with its rights fully developed. It coincides with the period when the rule of the leading cities is conclusively established."<sup>1</sup>

Similar opinions are expressed by Dovnar-Zapolsky in his study *The Veche*. He writes: "The ancient Rus *veche* did not emerge in historical times. Its origins lie in the earliest customs of the Slavs." He then quotes Procopius, recalls the Drevlyane, the treaties with the Greeks and quotes the *Lavrenty Annals* on the "existence of the *veche* system from time immemorial," i.e., follows in Sergeye-vich's footsteps. But later he differs from the latter and makes use of the paper by Vladimirsky-Budanov with substantial amendments and addenda. In his opinion, the Rus princes maintained their rule by military force among the tribes, "with the exception of Novgorod and Kiev, i.e., the Novgorod Slavs and the Polyane. When the prince ruled with the aid of a hired army, which was mainly foreign, the voice of the *veche* could not be heard. But the *veche* was not completely subdued by military force. It continued to deal with the affairs of the tribe and the *gorods*, because the princes limited themselves to the collection of tribute and did not interfere with the administration.... As the principalities developed, the *veche* lost its tribal nature because they did not always coincide with the ancient tribal frontiers. It was in this period, i.e., from the end of the 11th century, that the *veche* relations began rapidly to develop."

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<sup>1</sup> M. F. Vladimirsky-Budanov, *A Survey of the History of Russian Law*, pp. 52-53.



The decline of *veche* assemblies in Muscovite Rus and in Lithuania was caused by different events. The Tatar conquest was "one of the major causes" in the case of Eastern Rus. Dovnar-Zapolsky believes the second to lie in the peculiar nature of Muscovite Rus. "It is the *veche*," he writes, "the emergence of *gorods* in Rus, the appearance of an itinerant trade population. Life was entirely different in north-eastern Rus: it was an agricultural Rus, in contrast with the trading Dnieper and Volkhov Rus. The villager found it difficult to react to every political event." In Western Rus "the *veche* functioned more calmly and with a few exceptions peacefully co-existed with the hereditary princely power." After the integration of Western Rus in the Lithuanian state, "the *veche* continued to exist for some time . . . although it was naturally deprived of its political importance. The loss of political independence transformed the *veche* from a political organ into a unit of local self-government." The *veche* ends up as a *sejm*.

Dovnar-Zapolsky, like some other authors, presents the history of the *veche* in connection with the development of Ancient Rus as a whole. He contrasts the urban trading Rus in the Dnieper and Volkhov basins to the rural, agricultural Rus in the north-east. He holds that the tribal system existed under the state of Ancient Rus and fell apart only in the appanage period. Foreign military forces controlled by the princes hindered the development of the *veche* system, with the unexplained exception of Kiev and Novgorod. The princes manifestly refrained from "interfering in the administration," etc. But the author undoubtedly tries to present the *veche* in its development and to introduce some periodization into its history.

Kluchevsky also gives a periodization of the *veche* history. He holds that the *veche* of the *volost* cities emerged in the 11th century, "becoming increasingly vocal from the end of that century and spreading throughout the country." The rise of the *veche* meetings took place after the

decline of the princes' prestige "due to the internecine wars" and the growth of the regions with their cities. Kluchevsky does not find any *veche* meetings prior to the 11th century. He makes no special study of the *veche* and his views are set out in a general course. I think his indication of the period when the urban *veche* assemblies emerge and increase their influence is correct.

Pokrovsky admits that the *veche* had its own history. "It would be very remiss of us," he says, "to think that the *veche* remained immutable throughout its entire history." But he himself refuses to study that history: "We leave aside the problem of the origin of the *veche* and its evolution ..." he declares, explaining elsewhere that "we draw a dividing line between this earliest tribal *veche*" and the later urban *veche*, "because there are no grounds to connect them as successive links in a single chain." "We see the emergence of the Kiev urban *veche*," he writes, "in very different social and economic circumstances: there is absolutely no purpose in seeking its remote ancestors."<sup>1</sup>

Having noted correctly that the Kiev *veche* of the 12th century was different from the *veche* of tribal society, Pokrovsky is wrong in refusing to seek the ancestors of the Kiev people's assembly of the 12th century. The task of the historian is to study social phenomena in their development. The author does not wish to do this. Having set out his main views, he considers it unnecessary to delve into the past in his studies of the *veche* assemblies of the 12th century. He confines himself to a statement of 12th-century facts regarding the urban *veche* system. "The Ancient Rus republics," he writes, "began with an aristocracy of birth and ended up with an aristocracy of capital. But in between these there was a phase which could be called democratic. In Kiev it coincides with the first half of the

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<sup>1</sup> M. N. Pokrovsky, *An Outline of the History of Rus Culture*, Part I, p. 247.



12th century. In that period the people were the factual rulers of the Rus cities."<sup>1</sup>

In Soviet times the *veche* has been examined by Yushkov. He divides the history of the *veche* assemblies into periods, namely, the tribal system, the Kiev state and the "feudal monarchy," as he calls the political system of the principalities which emerged with the disintegration of the state of Ancient Rus. I agree almost entirely with his description of the *veche* in the first and third periods, but not in the second. I believe Kluchevsky to have been right in refusing to see *veche* assemblies in 10th-century Kiev Rus, as stated by Yushkov. Yushkov himself acknowledges that there are no other reports about the *veche* in the 10th century save that about a *veche* in Belgorod besieged by the Pechenegs in 997. This does not warrant the conclusion that *veche* assemblies were a common phenomenon. Neither is the difficulty resolved by Yushkov's remark that "the principles of primitive democracy found sufficient expression at the *veche* in that period," because there are no grounds for the assertion that "primitive democracy" existed in 10th-century Ancient Rus. There was no trace of "democracy" in Ancient Rus. But Yushkov insists that "... the *veche*, whose beginnings lay in the tribal assemblies, also continued to exist under the Kiev state."<sup>2</sup>

Nor can I accept without reservations his description of *veche* assemblies in their *final* period, because his exclusion of "the broad urban democracy, the traders and the artisans" from the *veche* assemblies is too categorical. He believes the *feudal* upper orders of the cities to have been the mainstay of the *veche*. I think that in this he underestimates the part played by the cities in the politics of the principalities—as the facts indeed show. Of this more below.

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<sup>1</sup> A critique of Pokrovsky's views may be found in my article in the collection Против исторической концепции М. Н. Покровского (*Against Pokrovsky's Historical System*, Part I, Moscow-Leningrad, 1939, pp. 70-116).

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Yushkov, *Essays*, p. 194.

In 1946 Tikhomirov published his *Towns of Ancient Rus* in which he devotes a special chapter to the *veche*. There is no basic difference between our views. Tikhomirov puts it this way: "My view of the *veche* assemblies is in the main similar to that of B. D. Grekov in the new edition of his *Kiev Rus*."<sup>1</sup>

Here are the main periods in the history of popular assemblies in Rus as I see them.

By the 7th-9th centuries the class system was in evidence among the peoples in the Volkhov and Dnieper basin and tribal survivals began perceptibly to disappear. Political alliances, emerging on the ruins of the tribal system, took shape in several parts of this vast area as early as the 7th and 8th centuries. Unfortunately, we know nothing about their internal system. By the 9th century, one can speak of the existence of an early feudal state of Ancient Rus which grew rapidly and uninterruptedly during the 10th and the first half of the 11th centuries. The peak of its development was simultaneously a moment of maturity for the forces which worked for feudal fragmentation. The dismemberment of this state was due to the growth of its components headed by their leading cities.

This growth was connected not only with the increased economic might of these cities, but also with the greater political weight of the urban masses, which had to be reckoned with not only by the upper orders but even by the princes, whose number had multiplied. The subsequent history of the several parts of dismembered Rus depended upon the correlation of classes within each. These premises, substantiated above, form the groundwork for my revision of the periodization of the Ancient Rus *veche*.

From the above it becomes clear that all is not well with our periodization. The reason for this is also obvious. It is impermissible to divorce the history of the *veche* from the history of Rus as a whole, for the *veche* is only

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<sup>1</sup> M. N. Tikhomirov, *Towns of Ancient Rus*, p. 218.



an aspect, albeit an important one, of the entire historical process. It is not therefore surprising that there is considerable divergence of views on this involved subject.

But that is not all. It is not difficult to perceive even from the brief historiographical survey given above that the various authors who wrote on the *veche* infused the term with varying content. Vladimirsky-Budanov, for instance, finds it possible to apply the term even to the meetings convened by Prince Vladimir in Kiev at which he gathered his elders and boyars and "many people." The author himself realizes the danger of such an interpretation, and hastens to warn the reader that there were *two future* institutions combined in such "*zemstvo dumas*," namely the boyar *duma* and the *veche*. It is not quite clear why the author speaks of "future" institutions, including the *veche*, since he considers that the "*zemstvo дума*" was the "second phase" in the history of the *veche* and a "transition from the tribal assembly to the urban." His explanation that he regards the urban popular assembly as a *veche* assembly having the most developed forms of that governing body helps to clarify the situation to a certain degree.

The term *veche* is derived from the root "*ve*," hence, *veshchati*, which fully corresponds to *colloquium* and *parlamentum*. It is a popular assembly to debate and settle important public affairs.

I believe this definition requires no explanation, such as an assembly of "a leading city" or "a tribal assembly." We shall also be limiting the term if we define it as "an organ of *state* power," because we shall then be faced with the question of whether or not the popular assemblies of the pre-state period are to be regarded as *veches*.

We shall have to agree on a definite conception of the *veche* for the sake of convenience and clarity in the subsequent exposition. I think we could start by calling the *veche* a popular assembly (in class and pre-class society) for debating and settling public affairs. It is assumed that

these were important, since an assembly of the people would not be convened to debate trifles.

This leads us to the necessity of studying the popular assembly throughout the ages, paying careful attention to the circumstances under which it existed. The nature of these circumstances also serves to determine the periodization in the history of this important historical institution.

Considering that bourgeois scholars were also inclined to recognize the "tribal *veche*" on the basis of the sources, we shall not only have to acknowledge this view regarding the ancient origin of the *veche* assemblies as being correct, but shall also have to delve into the problem, bearing in mind the enormous material collected by Morgan. There is a special book by Frederick Engels based on that abundant material, in which he deals with the evolution of the pre-class system, the emergence of class society and the state with its key institutions. He pays special attention to the part played by *veche* assemblies in this process. Today we are justified in saying that under the tribal system the part played by the popular assembly depended on the stage of development reached by the system at each given moment. Here are these stages:

1. The administration of the tribe through a council of chiefs elected by the *gens*.

2. Co-ordination between the council of chiefs and the supreme military commander.

3. Administration by the council of chiefs, the *popular assembly* and the supreme military commander. This practice remained in force until "the institution of political society," i.e., the state.

"As a general rule the council (of chiefs—*Author*) was open to every individual who wished to speak on the matter being publicly debated. . . . But the decision was taken by the council."

In spite of the fact that the council was elected by the tribe for life, its members could always be removed. That



is why "it was unavoidable ... that the popular element should be commanding in its influence"<sup>1</sup> in the council.

The emergence of the state altered this system.

Here is how Engels describes the inception of the state in German society: 1. "The moment had arrived for transforming military leadership into kingship. This was done." 2. "The council of chiefs, even if it had not long become obsolete, could not have assembled and was soon replaced by the king's permanent retinue." 3. "The old popular assembly was still ostensibly preserved, but more and more as an assembly of the subcommanders of the army and the newly rising notables."<sup>2</sup>

There must have naturally been some deviations from this scheme in different parts of Europe and among different peoples, but these stages are in the main also applicable to the development of state power among other peoples. The earliest and sufficiently clear reports on the political system of the Slavs are given by Procopius (mid-6th century). He says: "The Slavs and the Antes are not ruled by one man, but have lived under democratic rule since time immemorial." That is why their public affairs were settled by general assemblies. Procopius tells of the general assembly (the *veche*) in connection with a Greek military leader called Hilvudii. "Almost all the Antes" gathered to settle the problem. They decided to act together. At the same time, they forced the pseudo-Hilvudii to play the role of the real Hilvudii and planned a campaign against Byzantium and the Slavs beyond the Danube.

Mauricius (late 6th century) describes the Slavs in a similar manner. "They have no administration," he declares, "and live in enmity with each other. They have many commanders who do not live in peace with each other, that is why it should be useful to attract some to our side

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society on Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization*, Li. D., Chicago, Chapter IV, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 303.

by promises, words and gifts, and particularly those who are nearest to our frontiers and then attack the other Slavs, to prevent a common war from fusing them and uniting them under one rule."<sup>1</sup>

Jordanes (6th century) gives a very interesting account of the Ante prince or king (*rex*), who is mentioned with 70 elders, chiefs (*primates*). The East Goth Vinitar fought the Antes and was defeated by them, but later succeeded in capturing their prince, Bozh (*regem eorum Boz nomine*). This Bozh is crucified together with his sons and 70 elders.<sup>2</sup>

The Antes were unquestionably Slavs who lived mainly in the middle reaches of the Dnieper and to the south-west of it. Bozh was doubtless a military commander with considerable forces, while the elders were possibly the chiefs elected by the *gens*. There can scarcely be any more plausible interpretation of this account.

There can be no doubt at all that the 9th century found the early feudal state of Ancient Rus already in existence. As we have seen, it was ruled by the Kiev prince with his vassal princes and boyars. There was a council of elders under the prince, and it may well be that *veches* were convened in the cities in case of emergency (though we have no definite proof of this), but at all events, it was a different *veche* from the one mentioned by Procopius. There were no favourable circumstances for the development of the *veche* system in Kiev either in the 10th century or in the first half of the 11th. The power of the Kiev prince was much too strong, and the city much too weak politically for the urban *veche* to have flourished side by side with the princely authority. With small exceptions, there are no reports of *veche* assemblies in the 10th century. Among the exceptions are the two sieges of cities by the

<sup>1</sup> Mauricius, *Strategicum*, XI, 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes, *De origine actibusque Getarum*. Monumenta Germaniae historica, Vol. V, 1882.



Pechenegs (Kiev in 968 and Belgorod in 997) *in the absence* of the princes and their men-at-arms.

The item for 968 describes the Pecheneg siege of Kiev when Svyatoslav was campaigning with his army on the Danube in Bulgaria. There is no mention of the *veche* in the account of the siege, but it appears to be implied. The besieged were at their wit's end. "And the people in the city began to grieve and said: 'Is there no one who could reach the other side and tell them: "If you do not arrive on the morrow we shall surrender to the Pechenegs."'" And one young man declared: 'I shall go.' And they told him: 'Go.'" This is an *ad hoc* assembly of the people convened in an emergency to find a way out. A similar case was the siege of Belgorod in 997. This account is doubtless legendary in origin. The *veche* is in this case clearly specified.

The story of the siege of Belgorod presents some aspects of urban life in the 10th century which are, one is inclined to presume, intertwined with similar facts from the 11th. We find the city elders and the citizens. The leading role played by the city elders in the *veche* is easily perceived. Belgorod was a favourite princely castle-*gorod*. The Pechenegs laid siege to it in the absence of the prince and his men-at-arms. The citizens had to withstand the siege and use their own wits. A *veche* was convened. It decided to surrender the city. One old man who did not attend the *veche*, but who had a plan of his own to defend the city wished to prevent the *veche* decision from being implemented and with that aim in view approached the "city elders." The elders gladly rescinded the *veche* decision. ("They gladly promised to take his advice.") Apparently they were empowered to annul the *veche* decision if they did it so easily. We should bear these facts in mind in drawing conclusions regarding the *veche*. We must also note another aspect of the problem: the *veche* should scarcely have been needed if the prince and his men-at-arms were present at the time. They would have acted on

their own initiative, as is clear from numerous similar cases. In the 10th century it was a rule that the *veche* was not convened if the prince was in the city. Instead the council of the city elders, the boyars and the *druzhina* was convened.

It was with his elders and boyars that Vladimir decided to accept Christianity, and it is on their advice that envoys were dispatched to Byzantium to study the Christian faith. When the envoys returned they reported to these same elders and boyars. Together with the elders and boyars the prince decided to substitute the wergild for the blood feud. Summing up the results of Vladimir's political activities, the chronicler declares: "For Vladimir loved his *druzhina* and with them he thought about the administration of the land, and about the armed forces and the law of the land."<sup>1</sup> But it cannot be asserted that the people had no say even at the height of princely power in Kiev. We have already seen the people in action during the Pecheneg siege of Kiev in 968. The "people" of Kiev played a part in many events in Kiev, although they did not have a decisive say. An account in the chronicle for 983 tells of two Varangians, of the Christian faith, father and son, who perished because of the father's unwillingness to sacrifice his son to the pagan Slavonic gods. The "elders and the boyars" suggested that lots be drawn, and the lot fell to the young Varangian. When the father flatly refused to sacrifice his son, those who were sent from "the elders and boyars" addressed the "people" ("...they went to tell the people"), who were present. It was they who "took apart the bailey near him."<sup>2</sup>

This was, of course, no *veche*. Nor was it a popular meeting, it was an excited mob who reacted vigorously to events.

A similar incident is reported in the chronicle for 987. "The elders and the boyars" told of their impressions of

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 124; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81, and p. 58.



the various religions in the presence of the prince and the people. "And their speeches gladdened the prince and all the people," i.e., those who were then present. Obviously there was no *veche* here, either. These were the people whom Vladimir often invited to visit him. The item for 996 tells of Vladimir's celebration of the major events of his reign. After the Desyatinnaya Church was completed, he "arranged a great festival for the boyars and the city elders on that day..." After a victory over the Pechenegs he "made a great feast, brewing 300 vats of honey. And he called together his boyars, and *posadniks*, and the elders from all the cities, and many people." During "the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary he also arranged a great feast," inviting "countless numbers of people..."<sup>1</sup> "And this he did every year." It should be remembered that these reports are not contemporary. We cannot say with certainty who is meant by the term "people." One thing is clear, however: they were not boyars, nor elders, not yet *posadniks*, i.e., not the upper orders of Kiev society, but rather the people of the city. They were apparently the same people who, somewhat later, in a different political situation, treated the princes in a different manner. It should be stressed that even the most powerful of the princes of the period reckoned with the urban mass and, apparently, could not have done otherwise. Such was the state of affairs in Kiev.

But it should be borne in mind that Ancient Rus was a state which enjoyed only relative unity. The level of social development in its component parts was not uniform.

It appears, for instance, that the tribal system among the neighbouring Drevlyane had not completely disappeared by the 10th century. "The Drevlyane land" (this term may well denote a popular assembly), rather than the Drevlyane princes, dispatched their envoys to Olga. Conferences between the chiefs and the popular assembly were

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 122, and p. 85.

quite possible. This appears to be supported also by the numerous princes of equal standing among the Drevlyane ("our princes are kind..."<sup>1</sup>). If we may assume the existence of a *veche* here, it must have been similar to the old popular assembly.

It is quite possible that assemblies existed among other more backward tribes within the state of Ancient Rus. Thus, the Chernigov princes Davidovichy "gathered the Vyatichy"<sup>2</sup> as early as the 12th century for joint action.

These popular assemblies of the Drevlyane should not be confused with the conferences of the Kiev prince with his boyars. The former were survivals of the tribal system, while the latter emerged with the strengthening of princely power and the divorcement of government from the masses which had already emerged from tribal society.

We should not be confused by the fact that both phenomena appear simultaneously and parallel to each other. Our country occupied a vast expanse even in those days and presented a varied picture as regards the level of development of its components.

It would be an error to ignore these facts and view all parts of the vast Rus territory as going through one and the same phase. That is why one cannot but object to Sergeyevich's interpretation, which does not take into account the peculiarities of the many parts of Ancient Rus.

Sergeyevich sees no difference between such facts as the chronicler's undated account of ancient times ("after conferring the Polyane gave a sword per household"), or that of 945 about the negotiations of the Drevlyane with Princess Olga ("and the Drevlyane sent their best men..."), or yet the treaties with the Greeks (907-911) pertaining to the city of Kiev, its society and its prince. Sergeyevich draws a general conclusion from these facts, despite the fact that they apply to different periods and

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 54 et al; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 40 et al.

<sup>2</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 240.



to different regions. We should protest most vigorously against such methods of research.

Having correctly noted traces of the archaic system among the Polyane prior to the 9th and among the Drevlyane prior to the mid-10th century, Sergeyevich tries, in a most arbitrary manner, to invest 10th-century Kiev with these features, although by then it undoubtedly had a state system. He believes that the 10th-century treaties with the Greeks were the fruit of *veche* decisions. In his opinion, as we have seen, the fact that the envoys to conclude a treaty with Byzantium were sent not only on behalf of the prince and his boyars, but also from all the Rus people, is an indication that the *veche* was the sponsor of the treaty in question. He affirms that Igor's people who took part in concluding the treaty included the entire Kiev population and not any restricted group of Igor's vassals.<sup>1</sup> But a closer examination of the 944 Treaty refutes this conclusion. Here is the full text: "And our Grand Prince Igor, and his princes, and his boyars, and all the Rus people have sent us to Roman and Constantine and Stephen, to the Great Greek kings, to establish friendship with the kings themselves, with all the boyars and with all the Greek people..."

"All the Rus people" are the counterpart of "all the Greek people." The *veche* has nothing to do with either.

The 911 Treaty clearly specifies the parties to the treaty. The envoys to conclude the treaty were sent "from Oleg, the Rus Grand Prince," and on behalf of all who are under him, the eminent and great princes and eminent boyars." "And so do you, Greeks," we read in the treaty, "preserve the friendship with our eminent Rus princes and all those who are under our eminent prince."

If we take into account the possibilities of certain changes in the scope and nature of the Kiev prince's power in the 34 years between 911 and 944, i.e., from Oleg's treaty

<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. II, pp. 33-34.

to Igor's, we shall discover that, far from being weakened, it had unquestionably grown and continued to grow approximately up to the mid-11th century. This gave the *veche* fewer opportunities to influence political life.

The 944 Treaty also mentions "all the Rus people,"<sup>1</sup> but in a sense entirely different from that which Sergeyevich ascribes to it. The Rus prince mentions all the Rus people in order to underscore the obligatory nature of the treaty for all his people. "And whosoever from the Rus land tries to destroy this friendship," whether Christian or unbaptized (i.e., literally every Rus), "he shall have succour neither from God nor from Peroun. . . ." There you have the reason for the mention of "all" the Rus people. I believe this also applies to the other signatory. The treaties were concluded on behalf of Rus by the Kiev prince with his ruling retinue, not by the *veche*.

The rise of *veche* assemblies takes place in the second half of the 11th and in the 12th centuries.<sup>2</sup> We find exceptions only in Novgorod, where the *veche* is mentioned in 1016. This "exception" is quite logical and is easily understood because the processes which came to light in other parts of the state of Ancient Rus in the second half of the 11th century began much earlier in Novgorod.

How are we to explain the fact that the *veche* assemblies became especially active precisely in the second half

<sup>1</sup> " . . . On behalf of Igor, the Rus Grand Prince, and all the princes and all the Rus people." "And our Grand Prince Igor and his princes, and his boyars, and all the Rus people have sent us to Roman. . . ." (The 944 Treaty.)

<sup>2</sup> *Veche* assemblies between the 10th and 12th centuries are reported by our chronicles as follows: in Belgorod in 997 (the legendary story of the siege of that city by the Pechenegs); in Kiev in 1068, 1113, 1146, 1147, 1150; in Vladimir of Volyn in 1097; in Zvenigorod in 1147; in Polotsk in 1159, 1185; in Smolensk in 1185; in Rostov in 1157, 1175; in Suzdal in 1157, 1175; in Vladimir-on-Klyazma in 1157, 1175, 1176; in Pereyasavl in 1175; in Ryazan in 1177; in Great Novgorod (leaving aside the very unlikely story about the invitation of Vladimir, inserted in the chronicle for 970) in 1016, 1136 and 1137. Presnyakov's observation that our sources "give no indications of activities by the *veche*" prior to the 11th century is correct with the exception of the two dubious reports referred to above.



of the 11th century? I believe that this phenomenon is connected with the fragmentation of the state of Ancient Rus.

As Kiev's importance as a political centre uniting vast expanses declined, and the power of the different parts grew, the big cities gained in importance. They began to defend the independence of their areas from the incursions of the old "mother of Russian cities." The *veche* assemblies gained ground and the outlying districts as well as the princes were forced to reckon with them.

But how are we to account for that classical report of the *Laurenty Annals* used by all our scholars to prove that *veche* assemblies had existed from time immemorial among the Eastern Slavs?

This famous account in the chronicle for 1176 does, indeed, refer to urban popular assemblies, but it is impossible to date this institution back to ancient times ("from time immemorial") without serious reservations. The text requires comment. The item for 1176 in the *Laurenty Annals* gives a striking account of the struggle of the Vladimir artisans and petty merchants against the Rostov and Suzdal boyars. The chronicler was inspired by the victory of the "new," "minor" people over the old high-born boyars in Rostov and Suzdal. He recalls that everywhere and at all times the outlying districts submitted to the decisions of the senior cities. In this case, the result was quite the contrary. "And we can only marvel at the *new and glorious miracle* wrought by the Holy Mary," he writes, "at the way in which she protected her city from great calamities, and how she fortifies her citizens: for God did not send fear into their hearts and they were not afraid although they had two princes in that region. And all the restrictions of their boyars they considered null and void. And they were in the city of Vladimir without a prince for seven weeks, and they placed their hopes and expectations in the Holy Mary and in their right. *For the Novgorodites, like the people of Smolensk and Kiev and Polotsk and of all other regions gather in veche, as in coun-*

*cil since time immemorial. And the outlying parts agree to what the elders decide.* Here, however, the old city of Rostov and Suzdal and all the boyars wished to establish their own law but did not wish to do God's will. And they said: 'We shall do as we wish. The city of Vladimir is ours,' "and they did not understand God's will, those of Rostov and Suzdal of that time, declaring themselves to be the *elders*. But the *new minor people* of Vladimir, having understood, stood firm for the right. . . ."<sup>1</sup> "Not wishing to submit to Rostov and Suzdal because they said: let us burn down Vladimir, or appoint another *posadnik*, for they are our *kholops* and stone-hewers."<sup>2</sup> (The *Nikon Annals* say: "*kholops*, stone-hewers, wood-workers and ploughmen.")

It becomes quite clear that the chronicler believed the assemblies in Rostov and Suzdal to date back to time immemorial, and that the old notables, the Rostov and Suzdal boyars, had held complete sway in them. Until then they had used these assemblies in the leading city to hold the outlying areas in subjection. The chronicler would have us believe that such had been the case since "time immemorial." This expression "from time immemorial" applies not so much to the existence of the *veche* system (for the chronicler could scarcely have been concerned with the chronology of the *veche* assemblies) as to the customary duty of the outlying areas to submit to the cities, i.e., to the domination of the Rostov and Suzdal notables over the people of Vladimir, who were only "minor" people. In any event, the stress appears to be on this. The notables mentioned are those very same "eminent boyars" whom the Kiev Grand Prince represented in the treaties with the Greeks. This state of affairs persisted for some time, until a rift appeared.

The fragmentation of the state of Ancient Rus into so-called *udels*<sup>3</sup> was due to the appearance of regions which

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, pp. 358-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ipaty Annals*, p. 405.

<sup>3</sup> *Udel*—a derivative of *deliti*—to divide.—*Tr.*



had sufficiently matured to exist without aid from the Kiev prince and realize the advantages of separation from Kiev. Such is the fate of all so-called early feudal monarchies. Every one of these major parts of the state of Ancient Rus, relatively united until quite recently, had its own axe to grind. This went counter to the recent-existing political system. In fact, why should Novgorod, Smolensk, Polotsk, etc., be involved in Kiev's complicated affairs and pay it tribute, when money and troops were needed at home by the boyars in these cities for their own ends, which they believed they could now attain without Kiev's assistance?

But it is not only and not always the boyars who were to be reckoned with. In the Rostov and Vladimir events of 1176 we discover a new force which worsted the boyars—the city, with its merchants and artisans. The princes were also forced to reckon with them. The maturing regions tried to acquire their own princes. Many princes thought this a good idea. They had been vassals of the Grand Prince for long enough. New times had arrived. But they did not always realize that the regions continued to grow and in their newly-gained strength were beginning to shape their own future, and tried to utilize the princes for their own ends although in this they were not always successful. In some places we see the princes turned into mere officials—this happened where influential boyars and their men-at-arms took power into their own hands (Novgorod in the middle of the 12th century, unsuccessful attempts to follow suit in Rostov and Suzdal and the murder of Prince Andrei). Elsewhere, the urban lower orders—the artisans and the merchants—were supported by the princes and their men-at-arms in their struggle against the boyars. In the latter case, the position of the prince was consolidated (the Galich and Volyn principality in the first half of the 13th century). At times he assumed full power

(the Vladimir principality, particularly under Vsevolod Bolshoe Gnezdo<sup>1</sup>).

The *veche* system predominates in the hey-day of the new urban centres. This period varies according to region. Thus, the Novgorod boyars, although forced to reckon with the urban masses and the *veche* system in the city, none the less succeeded in securing preponderance in the country and did not relinquish it for several centuries (up to 1478), except in the periods when the urban lower orders resorted to vigorous action. They invariably nominated candidates for the elective *posadniks* and millenaries from their own ranks putting the *veche* system to good use. There the *veche* died with the passing of the boyar republic. We find a similar situation in Pskov. In Vladimir, the *veche* came to a relatively early end.

It is in the western and north-western regions of the state of Ancient Rus, neighbouring on Lithuania and Poland, where the rule of the *mocnovladstwo* and the *szlachta* was firmly established for a long time, that the *veche* system survived. In both areas the "republican" institutions restricting the powers of the princes and kings were of similar origin.

In his *Veche and Prince* Sergeyevich presents copious material which has not lost its significance to this day. He makes many interesting and profound observations. Its only drawback, I believe, is his failure to take into account the concrete historical circumstances under which the *veche* existed in the various parts of Rus and at various periods of its history until it disappeared.

I disagree with his assertion that it was the Tatars who played the decisive role in putting an end to *veche* assemblies.

He insists that the Tatars *first* gave the Rus principalities an inkling of the power which admitted of no compromise and had to be submitted to unconditionally, for the

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<sup>1</sup> *Bolshoye Gnezdo*—Big Nest.—*Tr.*



Tatar khans did not conclude any agreements with the "people."<sup>1</sup> He errs in saying that the "Rus principalities" first came to learn of power which admitted of no "agreement"; not only the Tatar khans, but also the Kiev princes concluded no agreements with the "people" before the mid-11th century. If we must speak of agreements, in any case very relative, we should say that they were concluded with the rulers of the tribes and peoples integrated in the state, and not with the people. Finally, "the basis for *veche* activities," where such existed, was in no way destroyed under the Tatars. Novgorod had a taste of Tatar rule and well realized the need for unconditional submission to the horde, but never ceased its practice of *veche* assemblies. The reasons for their termination have nothing to do with the Tatars.

In conclusion, we must say that popular assemblies have their own history, which is firmly linked with every phase of the country's existence. The periods of *veche* history are periods in the history of the peoples who comprised the state of Ancient Rus. Here are my basic conclusions:

1. The *veche* has its roots in the tribal system.
2. The appearance of the state undermined the basis of the *veche*'s existence. The strong Kiev prince did not conclude any "agreements" with the people and confined himself to consultations with the *druzhina*, mostly the senior men-at-arms. *Veche* assemblies (precise information is lacking) were probably called only in exceptional cases, when, for example, the cities were left to their own resources in the absence of the princes.
3. The historical process was not uniform throughout Ancient Rus. In the 9th and 10th centuries Kiev was ahead of the provinces in this respect. We do not find any *veche* assemblies in the Ancient Rus centre in the 10th century,

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<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Sergeyevich, *Russian Juridical Antiquities*, Vol. II, p. 34.

but such assemblies existed in the more backward parts of the state and were of the nature of tribal assemblies.

4. The *veche* assemblies were stirred into activity in the second half of the 11th century with the growth of Rus's several parts, particularly the cities.

5. The *veche* assemblies survived much longer in the north-west (Novgorod, Pskov, Polotsk), due to a definite correlation of class forces when the feudal notables, who seized power and restricted the power of the princes in their own interests, were unable to destroy the popular assembly but were strong enough to make it serve their turn.



VII. THE ORIGIN  
OF RUSSIAN CULTURE  
AND THE CULTURE OF KIEV RUS





If, before you inspect Kiev's Sophia Cathedral, you are inclined to be condescending regarding the ability of our ancestors to express the great and the beautiful, then you will be greatly astonished.

You no sooner cross the threshold than you come under the spell of its grandeur and magnificence. Its imposing interior, its austere proportions, its ornate mosaics and frescoes captivate you by their perfection even before you have had an opportunity to examine the details and to comprehend what it was the creators of this outstanding work of architecture and painting had in mind. Hilarion, the Russian metropolitan, did not exaggerate when he said: "This is a beautiful church, celebrated in all neighbouring countries, the like of which is not to be found in the entire northern land from east to west. Even when reconstructed after considerable damage in the 17th century this cathedral evoked the astonishment of foreigners. "It was a mystery to me," writes Paul of Khaleb (he visited Kiev in 1653), "where they (the Russians—*Author*) procured the marble for the tremendous columns outside the church, for there is nothing anywhere in this whole country that suggests the quarrying of marble. It turned out that they brought it across the Black Sea from Marmora, which is near Constantinople, and then up the big river Niepros, which empties into that sea. It was unloaded at the city of Kiev."

Your astonishment will be even greater when you learn

that St. Sophia is not the only and, perhaps, not even the finest monument of its kind. Right next to it was another great church which was destroyed by Batu during the siege of the city—the so-called Desyatinnaya Church, also known as the Sophia.

It occupied a large area (1,542.5 square metres, compared with the Sophia of Yaroslav—1,325 without the galleries) and, judging from the remnants of building material and ornamentation, its decorations were no poorer than those of the Yaroslav Sophia. Numerous marble fragments (the annals go so far as to call this cathedral a "marble" one), the small bits of marble bases and capitals, the chips of jasper which was evidently brought from the Crimea, the pieces of floor of multi-coloured marble, the glass, and the large slabs of plate, most likely from the Carpathians, the bits of mosaic murals and fragments of Greek inscriptions—all leave no doubt regarding the nature of the edifice.

The ruins of another large building, not a church, which probably collapsed at the same time, bear traces of equal splendour. This structure, usually known as Princess Olga's Palace, was a two-storey brick building, and among its ornamentation, found in a pile of rubbish on the site of a fire, were fine brick slabs of a light brown hue, marble, red slate, mosaics, frescoes, glass, etc.

The palace was built before the Desyatinnaya Church, some time about the middle or even in the first half of the 10th century.

Vladimir, who was concerned to build churches to give Rus the appearance of Christianity, had an excellent appreciation of ancient art. He could not refrain from carrying off from Korsun, which he had captured, some antique statues, two sacrificial altars, and a quadriga ("On his way back he took two bronze statues and a quadriga, also in bronze, which to this day stand behind the Church of the Virgin Mary.<sup>1</sup> The uninformed believe them to be made of

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<sup>1</sup> Desyatinnaya Church.—*Author.*



marble."), and placed them in the most prominent place. They adorned the capital until it was taken by Batu.

In a similar manner Charlemagne adorned his capital Aix-la-Chapelle with a statue of Theodoric he had carried off from Ravenna, while a quadriga from Constantinople to this day adorns the façade of St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice.

An equally profound impression is produced by Great Novgorod, which has succeeded in preserving its own Sophia, erected in 1045-51 in place of a 13-cupola wooden church destroyed by fire. Chernigov prided itself on its Spas Cathedral, built by Yaroslav's fortunate rival, his brother Mstislav. Unfortunately, the latter's capital, Tmutarakan, has not preserved any ancient cultural treasures. Polotsk rebuilt its Sophia Cathedral considerably, but from its remnants we can still get an idea of the architectural conception of its creator. There is no need to list all the treasures of Kiev, Novgorod, Chernigov, Polotsk, Galich and other cities of Rus. Even without such a recital, one is struck not only by the high level of Russian culture during the 10th and 11th centuries, but also by its wide diffusion over the tremendous expanses of Eastern Europe.

Whence this scale and excellent taste of our ancient art? Very often Greek engineers and craftsmen are cited as the explanation. That, however, is only a half-truth. Huge structures demand not only experienced engineers, they also require skilled workers, and these were obviously not imported from Greece. At that time Rus had many of her own artists and craftsmen. Their fame had spread far and wide as long ago as the 9th and 10th centuries. In a well-known treatise by Theophile (late 10th century) on the technique of various handicrafts, Rus is placed second only to Byzantium in a list giving the leading countries of Europe and the East. It comes before England, Italy, France and Germany. This is even more true of later periods.

A legend about Boris and Gleb (12th century) mentioned the skill of the Russian artist, who, it says, "so beautiful-

ly adorned (the sepulchre of Boris and Gleb—*Author*) that I cannot describe this art in a worthy manner, and many who come from the Greeks and from other lands say: 'There has never been anything of like beauty anywhere.'" A Byzantine poet of the 12th century praised Russian ivory carving and compared the Russian craftsman with the legendary Daedalus. Joannes de Plano Carpini, an Italian, who had seen many exquisite things in his own land, could not refrain from commenting on something that he saw in the Palace of Kuyuk-Khan, namely, the khan's throne made by the Russian craftsman Kozma: "The throne was a marvelous carving of ivory; there was also gold, precious stones and pearls, if my memory does not fail me."<sup>1</sup>

The engineer merely fulfils an order, and the patron in the given instance was the state of Ancient Rus, concerned with making Kiev not inferior of Constantinople, with having its own Sophias in the largest cities of Rus, and, above all, in its capital. It wanted the magnificence and immensity of the capital's buildings to awaken a realization of the greatness of his people and his state in the citizen of Rus.

These indications—preserved accidentally—of the beauty and splendour of the civilization of the state of Ancient Rus, give us the right to judge other aspects of social life which are of necessity interconnected. Everything at our disposal—household article or costume ornament, weapon or poem, sermon or literary work—indicates that imposing structures, their gifted builders and outstanding artists did not appear accidentally in the capital of Rus and other Russian cities in the 10th and 11th centuries, but were the result of historical development.

All this, of course, could not have appeared overnight. It came as a result of the life of a people that knew how to work, a people rich in creative thought and talent, and capable of ensuring its own progress.

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<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, *Handicrafts in Ancient Rus*, p. 532.



We are able to trace the main stages in the development of this civilization which gave such concrete indications of its maturity as far back as the 10th and 11th centuries.

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In examining a culture we should consider not only a people's own achievements, but also the heritage they received from their ancestors.

We cannot state specifically just how and when the Slavs appeared on the historical scene, but we can with absolute confidence say that their origins—root and branch—date back to pre-Scythian and Scythian times. The ancestors of the Slavs were the agricultural and cattle-breeding neolithic tribes of Eastern Europe.

Have we the right, in studying Slavonic culture, to ignore the heritage left by their ancestors who were already familiar with agricultural implements and many varieties of grain crops, used domesticated animals, had learned the secret of mining and treating metals, and developed certain conceptions of this world and the next with the resultant religious rites?

There were naturally many changes in the life of the masses consequent upon the changes in the ethnogenic process which culminated in the formation of the Slavonic people. But this new ethnic unit could not have forgotten all the cultural achievements that preceded it, and it would be a grave error to refuse to examine the old heritage without which the history of Slavonic culture cannot be understood.

This, incidentally, applies to every nation. There is no people without ancestors. Nor can a nation's history be examined without consideration of the culture created by its forerunners.

Only in this way can we avoid the gross errors that abound in historical writing dealing with this subject. For instance, von Schlözer (1735-1809), a German historian, described the East-European plain "as terribly savage and

bare," up to the 9th century. "Of course, people lived there," he says, "God knows since when . . . but they were people who had in no way distinguished themselves, who had no intercourse whatsoever with the southern peoples, which is why they could not be noticed and described by any enlightened Southern European."

This opinion was supported by the German pseudo-scholars invited to the Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as by some Russian scholars, and was widely accepted in its time. It is instructive to analyse it.

The celebrated Schlözer should have known, of course, that the people whom he considered savages had at various times been associated with the most civilized peoples of the world—the Hellenes, Romans, Arabs, Greeks (Byzantines), and others—and that the Arabs and the Greeks had taken considerable "notice" of them and, when the need arose, had "described" their neighbours, the Slavs, and that, finally, these more civilized peoples had found it necessary not only to "notice" but also, for their own good, to make a serious study of the Slavs, who by no means seemed to them to resemble the birds and beasts. It is true that other German savants, Schlözer's contemporaries, disagreed with him. Heinrich von Storch (1766-1835), for example, reminded him that the Eastern Slavs had carried an extensive trade with both the East and the West in the 8th century. However, this did not in the least embarrass Schlözer. He felt that he had decided the controversy in his own favour by describing Storch's reasoning as illiterate and monstrous.

In his stubborn defence of his conception of Ancient Rus. Schlözer himself encountered arguments that seemed to shatter his case. Why did Byzantium conclude agreements with Rus? Why had Rus acquired many of her navigation terms from Byzantium and not from the Normans, from whom, according to Schlözer's theory, she should have taken them? Why had the Normans become Slavonicized so rapidly? Schlözer at times treats facts in rather ar-



bitrary fashion. He declares Oleg's agreement to be a forgery, calls the existence of Byzantine navigation terminology an accident, and simply refuses to explain why the Normans became Slavonicized ("a phenomenon which even today is quite beyond explanation").

The controversy was bitter and prolonged, lasting more than a century. Today we can safely say that it was finally and irrevocably settled—not in Schlözer's favour.

The careful and systematic procuring, collecting and interpreting of archaeological material, and its comparison with written documents of foreign and Russian origin have made it possible for historians to state conclusively that the Slavs, like the other peoples, emerged as a result of long historical development. The spade reveals the history of a society sprawling over the territory around the Dnieper, to the east and west of it, from the Carpathians to the Don—an unbroken chain from Scythian times to the state of Ancient Rus inclusive.

Although the "Scythian period" is not directly connected with the history of the Eastern Slavs, it nevertheless communicated to them a number of features which took firm root in their life: their funeral rites, the Scythian-Sarmatian ritualistic images, which later found their way into Russian folk embroidery, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic fibula (clasps), Scythian terracotta designs on Russian clay toys, etc.

Objects discovered in this area bear traces of Roman influence from about the 2nd century A.D.

During the 6th-7th centuries an independent and unique East Slavonic, otherwise known as Ante, or Rus, culture took shape. From this period the Eastern Slavs are named Antes in the written sources, and Ros by Zacharias, a Syrian writer. It is quite probable that one of the right tributaries of the Dnieper, called the Ros, was named after the people. Archaeological facts sustain this presumption, for it is in the area around the Ros that the greatest number of Ante articles have been discovered. It was this very area,

the black-earth country, where the forest gives way to the steppe, that, in contrast to the northern forest belt, provided the conditions for the more rapid development of civilized life.

It was no accident that there, on the banks of the Dnieper, we find the burial mounds of the Scythian ploughmen, one of the most civilized groups among the Scythian tribes. Later on, in that same place we come across the Slavonic tribes of Polyane, Ulichy (until their migration to the south-west) and Severyane.

A period of more than 1,000 years separates the Scythian barrows from the Slavonic, yet the type of tomb in the Kiev and Poltava regions is essentially Scythian.

Among other things, the flourishing of the area in the middle reaches of the Dnieper in "Scythian times" was marked by an improvement in forging and casting (the manufacture of arms, sickles, arrow-heads, etc.), jewellery making, pottery, etc. Scythian production was influenced by the artifacts fashioned in the neighbouring Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast.

The blow dealt by the invasion of the Sarmatians resulted in a decline of Greek cities and, partially, of the culture of the Scythian ploughmen. But no catastrophe could destroy the cultural achievements of the Dnieper area, which in spite of everything continued to remain ahead of the northern forest belt in its development. The ancient roots of the Dnieper civilization proved to be stable and viable. When, with the growth of the Roman Empire, the map of the world was reshaped and the chain of Roman towns, fortresses and garrisons stretched from what is present-day Hungary to the Azov coast, the country around the Dnieper proved to be the best prepared to absorb elements of Roman civilization. It is here that the largest number of Roman coins of the 2nd and the early 3rd centuries were found. Evidently, this area, traditionally agricultural, established extensive trade relations with the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. This fact, by the way, affected the



Russian dry measure system: a Russian *chetverik* is not merely a translation of the Roman *quadrantal*, but equals it exactly in volume. Each contains 26.26 litres, just as the *medimnos*—the *polosmina*—equals 52.52 litres. The Russian *polosmina* contains two *chetveriks*.<sup>1</sup> This exact coincidence, both philological and quantitative, cannot be explained away as mere accident.

The bearer of the culture of that period was the early Slav population which left behind unique burial memorials, the "fields" of burial urns (1st-5th centuries).

These are to be found mainly in the Dnieper area, Volyn, Galich, and the area around the Western Bug. They lie side by side with the rectangular forts of Roman times in the lower reaches of the Dnieper.

Thus, the middle reaches of the Dnieper in the 1st-5th centuries present a considerable variety of material indicating the wide diffusion of Roman articles in the area.

The fall of the Western Roman Empire, the mass migration of Slavs across the Danube into the Eastern Roman Empire, a certain resultant shifting of Slavonic tribes and the invasion of the Avars, against whom the Slavonic tribes formed a great league under the leadership of the Duleby—all events of world magnitude—left their mark on the destiny of the Slavs in general, and, in particular, on their East-European branch.

A new epoch began in the history of the Eastern Slavs which leads us directly to an explanation of the brilliant civilization of Kiev Rus.

I have in mind the period between the 6th and the 8th centuries when the area around the middle reaches of the Dnieper strengthened its ties with the East and developed local industry to a very great extent. This process continued without interruption into Kievan times.

Archaeological studies of this highly interesting period in the history of pre-Kiev Rus are far from complete. But

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<sup>1</sup> B. A. Rybakov, op. cit., p. 43.

the material available today gives ground for substantiated conclusions.

The seat of these cultural achievements was the area around the Dnieper and Lake Ilmen,<sup>1</sup> whence their influence radiated over a considerable area. The splendour of these achievements paled somewhat in direct proportion to their distance from the centre, but their basic pattern remained the same: the ornamental design of its ceramics, for example, was fundamentally the same over a very large territory from the Dnieper to the Oka and the Don.

The age-long ties between the Dnieper area and the territory around the Azov and Black seas paved the way for the historical and cultural community of Chernigov and Tmutarakan.

This diffusion of the arts and crafts over an extensive Eastern Slav territory is more strikingly revealed in jewellery. The so-called radial fibula, made in the Dnieper area, and in particular in the area around the Ros, are to be found all along the Dnieper's right bank, from Kiev all the way south to Chigirin. Discoveries of these fibula coincide with the sites of Rus cities mentioned by the chronicles. They do not, in short, go beyond the Rus settlements.

That this is no mere accident, but is due to a community of culture, is proved by the fact that other minor articles of the 6th-8th centuries are diffused over the same territory. These include trapezoid pendants, crescent-shaped buckles, bells, plain and carved clasps, spirals, bracelets, etc.

Russian archaeologists, among them the bourgeois scholar A. A. Spitsyn and the Soviet scholar Rybakov, consider them to be characteristic of the Antes and Ante culture. It was precisely here that the "countless tribes of the Antes" were located, according to Procopius of Caesarea. It was here that the greatest numbers of caches of Byzantine

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<sup>1</sup> Recent excavations on the *Old Ladoga* (Ravdonikas) and *Noo-gorod* (Artsikhovsky) indicate that the area around Lake Ilmen was one of the major centres of Rus civilization.



and Eastern 6th-7th-century gold and silver articles were discovered.

The term "Ante" is found in a Bosphorus inscription, as well as in Kabarda folk-lore, where it means "giant" or "hero." This reminds us of the report by the Syrian pseudo-Zacharias in the middle of the 6th century, who says that in his time there lived a people west of the Don who were called Ros. They were so big and heavy that horses could not carry them. It is noteworthy that the testimony of Procopius of Caesarea that the Antes (and the Slavs) were "people of great height and strength" (III, 14) was a commonplace phenomenon when the name of a people was translated into various languages with the retention of the basic meaning of the original.

The works left by the Dnieper artisans of the 6th and 7th centuries are numerous and interesting. The materials used were mainly bronze and silver. Gilt was sometimes used. It was obtained by dissolving gold in mercury, a process borrowed by Rus from Rome.

From the artistic point of view their cast metal work, with its images of men, is particularly striking. The heads of the men reveal skilled craftsmanship. One's attention is particularly attracted to the clothing these figures wear: the blouses have long sleeves, the trousers reach down to the ankles, while the fronts of blouses have broad embroidered insets that reach to the waist. There is also embroidery on the sleeves. Such apparel has been characteristic of the entire population of the Dnieper area for many centuries, and is to be found even today in the Ukraine and Byelorussia. The heads of the men are unmistakably Russian, with peasant faces and the hair cut round. They are the work of the Polyane-Ante-Russian masters.

To attain such a degree of craftsmanship the artists had of necessity to have well-founded skills, experience, knowledge and talent. A point meriting special comment is that these people were not only able craftsmen but also produced articles in large quantities for an extensive market.

Judging from archaeological excavations, they found a market not only in the region between the Dnieper and the Don, but also in the Crimea and the Oka basin.

The northern part of Eastern Europe, namely, the territory of the Slovenes, the Krivichy, and in part of the Vyatichy, the Dregovichy and Drevlyane, lagged behind that of the Antes in its development and only gradually evolved towards the cultural level of the Dnieper area. But there, too, the blacksmith's trade becomes a specialized craft in the 6th-8th centuries, plough farming wins the day and casting and jewellery work is transferred from the women to the men. Standards in the manufacture of jewellery were set by the Rus South.

During this period, the Antes established close cultural ties with Byzantium and the East. Articles of Byzantine and Eastern craftsmen (chiefly Persian) appeared among the Antes in the 7th and 8th centuries. These were primarily luxury items, made of bronze, silver and gold (buckles, ornaments for horse harness, women's ornaments, belt clasps, weapons, axes, coats of mail and helmets). Ante craftsmen soon began to fashion similar things in their own land.

The Kama Bulgars were the chief intermediaries in establishing relations between the Rus Antes and the nations of the East. It is noteworthy that tremendous numbers of Eastern *dirhems* penetrated into Eastern Europe in the 8th and even in the 7th century, particularly after the Byzantine Empire had grown weaker in the 8th century. Eastern authors showed a lively interest in Eastern Europe, seeking to know more about the land which sent them valuable furs, flax—called Russian silk—wax and other articles which were partly or completely lacking in the East.

On the other hand, tales of the riches of the distant East spread throughout Rus and lured the more enterprising of her inhabitants. The centre of this eastward movement was Kiev.

The Normans, who appeared in Rus rather late (not until



the 9th century), were attracted not only by her wealth, but also by the possibilities of establishing contacts with Byzantium, Persia and the Arabs.

The riddle of the origin of Rus cities, as we have seen, is being successfully solved. The existence of a large number of cities in our country—whence it was called the land of cities (Gardarik) as early as the 9th century—was always a puzzle to explorers. Some of them believed the numerous small towns to be places of worship, while not denying the existence of larger towns which served as strongholds (Khodakovsky). Others, like Samokvasov, recognized the existence of large cities in Antiquity which later became uninhabited. Leontovich believed the Ancient Rus cities to be *refugia* in which the nomadic population gathered only in time of war, and it was only much later, in the period of the principalities (11th century), that these cities became populated localities and political centres. There are several other opinions on the subject.

Soviet scholars approach the subject from another angle. First of all, they recognize the city as a settlement of handicraftsmen and merchants divorced from the village. This serves to define the limits of research. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that cities arise only at a certain stage of social development.

The analysis of Eastern Slav society in the 7th and 8th centuries given above should serve to convince us that in the area along the main Dnieper-Volkhov thoroughfare the tribal system had already disappeared, classes had taken shape, trade was being carried on, and the first unstable kingdoms, the predecessors of Ancient Rus with its centre at Kiev, had made their appearance. It is very natural, therefore, that cities began to appear just at that time. These were either handicraft or trading settlements which were often fortified for military purposes, or fortresses around which craftsmen and merchants settled. All this testifies to the high cultural level of pre-Kiev Rus. There are many facts which confirm this, and they are constantly being in-

creased by new archaeological findings. The picture becomes ever clearer and there can be no doubt as to their meaning as a whole.

Men spent many centuries in far from fruitless endeavour to improve their living conditions, and their achievements merit earnest attention if we wish to understand the high level of cultural development attained in the succeeding centuries. This applies in equal measure to the civilization of Kiev Rus.

This interesting process is not reflected in Russian literature, while the more cultured peoples, those that were close to Rus territorially but sometimes very far removed as regards relations with Eastern Europe, had no incentive to make a profound study of the system prevailing in Rus. They were quite content to learn only those aspects of the life of the East-European tribes and peoples with which they were directly concerned. The Hellenes were well informed about Scythian wheat which fed them. The Arabs were attracted by the magnificent furs of the European North, and they made a careful study of the routes leading to the land rich in furs. The Byzantines were interested not only in trade connections with the Slavs, but also in securing their help as allies against the host of enemies that beset their declining state. The Arabs noted only certain salient facts in the life of their contemporaries the Slavs. Byzantine historians and statesmen recorded merely what they thought was of interest from the point of view of defence and only rarely overstepped these limits.

Herodotus, for instance, who visited the Hellenic colony on the Southern Bug, wished to study the life and the history of the peoples around Olbia. But being ignorant of their languages, he could only learn relatively little through interpreters.

But even if we take into account everything that has been said about the fore-runners of the Slavs, the Slavs themselves, and particularly the Eastern Slavs, we shall still be unable to get an idea of their civilization and the continu-



ity between the cultures of the various peoples associated with Russian culture. On the other hand, archaeological material is incomparably richer and more consistent. All we have to do is to make it speak the language we understand and to state our demands clearly. We can draw the following conclusions on the evidence provided by the spade:<sup>1</sup>

1. Although the connection between the civilization of the Scythians and that of the Eastern Slavs is not direct, there is no reason whatsoever to ignore it.

2. The Eastern Slavs come into contact with Rome in the very first centuries A.D.

3. Beginning with 6th century, the fruits of excavation enable us to speak more concretely about the nature of the civilization of the Eastern Slavs who from then on become known as the Rus-Antes.

4. During the same period the Rus-Antes come into direct contact with Byzantium and the peoples of the East and establish regular intercourse with them.

5. Cities appear among the Eastern Slavs in the 7th-8th centuries.

Thus, the Eastern Slavs, the Rus-Antes, had a considerable history of their own and had succeeded in making notable progress in their material culture prior to the formation of Ancient Rus, i.e., before the later half of the 9th century.

It is patent that material culture is the basis of social life. Therefore, if we bear in mind certain well-known facts gleaned from production, we shall find it easier to interpret and understand the scattered and often contradictory reports of foreigners in the distant past concerning the social system and civilization of the Eastern Slavs.

Procopius of Caesarea, that great Byzantine historian of the 6th century, said that the Antes and Slavs were not ruled by one man, but lived in a democracy and decided their affairs at popular assemblies, and that "all the ways of life and laws of both these tribes are identical." (Proco-

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<sup>1</sup> These are Rybakov's observations and conclusions. (B. A. Rybakov, *Handicrafts in Ancient Rus*.)

pius, III, 14.) He quotes certain of these laws, for instance, the one specifying that those who returned to their native land from captivity, whither they had been sold into slavery, became free "according to the law" (III, 13), or that the Antes concluded "agreements" with their neighbours and observed them faithfully (III, 13). With archaeological material behind this we have to admit that Ante society was far from primitive, and that if it constituted a "military democracy" it was not in its initial, but in its final stage. Its relatively well-developed crafts, the concentration of craftsmen at certain points—these manifest features of cities-in-the-making which indeed appeared soon after—warrant the rise of great political associations and the appearance of outstanding leaders capable of guiding the masses organized militarily and of directing large-scale military and political undertakings. It becomes clear why the Antes were able to rearm themselves so rapidly on the Byzantine pattern after encountering Byzantine troops in battle.

The success of the Antes in this field was founded on the quantity of metal mined, on the skill and number of their craftsmen and, of course, on their ability to master technical innovations rapidly, an ability which astonished foreign observers at the time and even later.

No longer do we wonder at the fact noted by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the 10th century that the significant Russian term "law" was incorporated in the Pecheneg language ("when the Pechenegs take the oath before the tsar's official according to their laws"—κατὰ τὰ ζῆκωνα αὐτῶν). It was from Rus that the Pechenegs obtained this word, which was lacking in their own language, just as the term voivode and all terms relating to agriculture were adopted by the Hungarians (they had their own terminology in cattle-raising). Mauricius Strategicus, the Byzantine, uses the Slavonic *plot*, well-known among the Slavs as a means of crossing rivers. He suggests that pontoons be prepared for crossing the numerous Slav rivers in the event of a campaign. ("...καὶ γεφυρώματα κατασκευάσαι, εἰ δυνατόν, τὰς λεγομένας



πλωτάς" — "if possible bridges, called rafts, should be prepared)."<sup>1</sup>

This clearly points to the development of an agricultural people, with relatively advanced agricultural techniques, spreading farming culture among its neighbours, nomadic and semi-nomadic, attaining a certain level of social relationships and possessing the elements of law.

Under such circumstances, the formation of the first political associations becomes historically inevitable. These include an alliance of the Duleby in the Carpathians (late 6th century) and somewhat later Slavia, Kuyavia and Ar-tania. These predecessors of the state of Ancient Rus are mentioned by Arab authors and indicate the high level of Kiev Rus's civilization.

Schlözer in the 18th century was not alone in being amazed at the mystery of Ancient Rus civilization; earlier observers were similarly puzzled. No less famous a person than Tacitus, an authority on the history of Rome and the peoples who came into contact with it in one way or another, was at first inclined to hesitate as to where he should place the Slavs (the Wends)—with the more backward Sarmatians or with the peoples that had already attained a certain level of civilization. But after he had studied the Slavs, he no longer hesitated and classified them among the settled peoples of Europe. "They build houses," Tacitus says, "and are armed with shields, and fight on foot."<sup>2</sup> ("*...Et domos fingunt et scuta gestant et pedum usu ac pernecitate gaudent.*") This is quite different from the Sarmatians who live in tents and move on horseback."<sup>3</sup>

It is much more difficult to penetrate the hearts and brains of our ancestors of so remote a period. The material at our disposal in this field is not so abundant. Of course, the

<sup>1</sup> *Mauricii artis militaris libri duodecim*. Ed. I Schefferus, Uppsaliae 1664, p. 277. I wish to thank N. V. Pigulevskaya for this report.

<sup>2</sup> This is Solovyov's correct translation of "*pedum usu ac pernecitate gaudent.*" (S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 44.)

<sup>3</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, cap. XLVI.

funeral rites as revealed by the spade are very enlightening. There are also the observations of the Byzantines, and furthermore, some survivals have found their way into Russian literature of a later period, while others continue to live on in tales, songs, *bylinas* and customs.

Procopius of Caesarea goes into considerable detail about Ante religious beliefs. "They consider," he writes, "that only one god, the creator of lightning, is lord over everything, and sacrifice bulls to him, and perform other sacred rites. They do not believe in fate, and do not generally admit that it has any power over man, and when they are ill or in the throes of death in battle they take a vow to offer a sacrifice to their god if they are saved, and if they do escape death they make the promised sacrifice, believing it to have been the price of their salvation. They worship rivers and nymphs, and all kinds of other deities, and offer sacrifices to them all, and with the help of these sacrifices divine the future."

It is hard to agree with Procopius when he says that he has spoken "adequately" about the religion and life of the Antes and Slavs. ("I consider that what has been said about this people is adequate.") What he has said is not much and, apparently, not altogether exact. However, it is worth noting that Procopius who was a Christian and who could not, needless to say, sympathize with a heathen faith, had nevertheless, in this case, neither ridiculed nor condemned it.

The Antes have one god, who is sovereign over all, and a number of spirits whom they also worship. The Christian God, of course, has no resemblance to the god of thunder, the creator of lightning, undoubtedly Peroun, whom all Slavonic peoples worshipped in pre-Christian days. Nor do their "other deities" in any way resemble the Christian devils. They are not evil spirits, but secondary deities whom the Slavs revered and to whom they offered sacrifices in their attempts to divine the future.

Theirs was already a well-developed religion. In the *Lay*



*About How in the Beginning Peoples Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols* there is reference to an earlier stage in the Slavonic religion: "They began to offer sacrifices to Rod and Rozhanitsas, before they worshipped Peroun, their god, and before that they made sacrifices to changelings and nymphs." First there was the worship of changelings and nymphs, then the gods Rod and Rozhanitsas, with Peroun appearing later.

We cannot, of course, expect the Byzantine scholar to give us a comprehensive picture of the religious conceptions of the Antes. It is unlikely that Procopius himself knew them all. He has, however, given us the gist of them, by naming their chief god who is lord over everything—Peroun. It is unlikely that he was wrong in this, for he learned it from the Antes and Slavs themselves, whom he undoubtedly met in person, since they held important posts in the imperial service in Constantinople. He was also aware that besides this supreme god they had secondary deities who were later elevated in rank and became Peroun's equals.

Three centuries later we note considerable changes in the religious conceptions of the Rus-Antes. The Russians, in their treaties with the Greeks in the early 10th century swore by two gods—Peroun and Volos. Oleg and his men took the oath "according to the Russian law: they swore by their arms and by Peroun, their own god, and by Volos, the cattle god." (907 Treaty.) There are two things which should be noted here: Peroun became a personal god for Oleg and his men-at-arms. He is their god *par excellence*. They, too, or perhaps some of them, swore by another god whom Procopius failed to mention, and whom neither Oleg nor his men call their own. They spoke of him as the cattle god, that is, the god of cattle, who had also become the god of money, wealth, commerce and merchants since the term "cattle" itself had already changed its original meaning. This is also confirmed by reports in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*.

When Vladimir Svyatoslavich sought to employ religion to strengthen the unity of the state of Ancient Rus, he considered the matter very carefully and acted on a grand scale. He decided to set up his own god, the god of the prince and his retinue, as the common god of the masses, and brought him out of his palace. "And he placed the idols on a hill outside the princely palace: the wooden Peroun with a silver head and golden moustache, and Khors-Dazhbog and Stribog, and Simargl and Mokosh." Vladimir simultaneously dispatched Dobrynya to Novgorod on a similar mission. "Upon his arrival in Novgorod, Dobrynya placed the idol on the bank of the Volkhov and the Novgorod folk offered sacrifices to it."

There is very much in this new sanctuary that merits serious attention.

In the first place, Volos does not figure here at all because, of course, it had nothing to do with the place. It stood elsewhere, in the market-place in Podol, on the very bank of the Pochaina River. Avraamy of Rostov also saw an image of the god in the Rostov region. It is evidently Volos, too, who figures in Ibn Fadhlān's account of Russian merchants who implore their idol to send them a good merchant with gold and silver money. The Russian delegation to Constantinople swore by two gods: one of them was the god of the prince, of his retinue, the military god, and the other was the merchants' god. This is understandable, because the envoys comprised two groups—the prince's warriors and the merchants.

Secondly, Vladimir's gods, set up in a prominent place for all to worship, included not only Russian gods: between Peroun and Dazhbog, the god of the sun, there stood Khors, who was also the sun god of the peoples of the East, Central Asia, whence the names of Khorezm, Khorasan, and others. Simurg (Simargl) also stood there. He is mentioned in the epos of the peoples in Central Asia. Mokosh, a goddess of the Finnish tribes (whence the name Moksha), was there too.



The head of the state of Ancient Rus, which embraced not only eastern peoples, but also those who spoke the Finnish tongue, had undoubtedly taken an important political step.

It was neither an artificial measure nor a daring act by a bold statesman. The merger of heterogeneous gods in a single pantheon had been gradually prepared by the long and close community of the peoples within the state of Ancient Rus. When Christianity was declared a compulsory state religion, Russians and non-Russians long continued to recognize the gods Vladimir had set up on a hill in Kiev and in other parts of his extensive state. As late as the 11th century the author of the *Lay About How in the Beginning Peoples Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols* had to admit that "even now on the outskirts they worship him, the accursed god Peroun, and Khors, and Mokosh and Vil. And this they do in secret."

Despite the paucity of our source-material, we cannot but observe the evolution of the heathen religion.

The first period known to us is the worship of changelings and nymphs, then of Rod and Rozhanitsas, i.e., ancestors. This is followed by the cult of the Peroun god, who was adopted by the ruling class and became the god of the prince and his men-at-arms as the ruling class gained strength. The cattle god Volos evolved into a god of wealth and trade, as cattle became a means of exchange and a monetary unit in trade. And, finally, when the state of Ancient Rus was at its zenith, a general pantheon was created for the entire country as a step towards uniting the country internally. In it the prince's god became the state god, while the gods of the chief peoples within the state of Ancient Rus likewise became full-fledged members of the divine community. The zeal in wiping out paganism after the adoption of Christianity has deprived us of material for a more profound study of the heathen beliefs of our ancestors which are of particular interest, mainly because they

were the product of the creativeness of the peoples of Ancient Rus and, above all, of the Russian people.

Not only did elements of the Iranian and Finnish faiths fuse with those of the Eastern Slavs at a very early date, but also those of more highly developed religions such as the Jewish, Mohammedan, Roman-Catholic and Byzantine (Greek Orthodox). Rus came to know all of them through her constant intercourse with the Khazars, the Arabs, Central Asia, Western Europe and Byzantium.

The fact that Christianity was adopted from Byzantium was the result of the whole of the preceding history of the Eastern Slavs and of Rus herself. Reports of Christian teaching in the Dnieper region date back to the first centuries A.D. and are associated in legend with the name of St. Andrew the Apostle. This piece of information found its way from some source into the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. ("After preaching at Sinope, Andrew came to Korsun... and proceeded to the mouth of the Dnieper, whence he moved up river along the Dnieper...") St. Andrew is reputed to have erected a cross upon the site which Kiev was one day to occupy, and to have predicted that there would arise "a great city and God would erect many churches here."

This is echoed by the church writers of the 4th and 5th centuries. Eusebius of Caesarea (died 340) says that the disciples of Jesus Christ dispersed in order to preach the Gospel, and that "Scythia" (as the Byzantines traditionally still called our country in the 10th century) fell to Andrew. According to Eucherius of Lyons (died 449) "Andrew mollified the Scythians with his word." The writings of Epiphanius of Cyprus (4th century) also indicate that Andrew had been among the Scythians. Academician Vasilyevsky, from whom I cite these valuable data, has many other facts confirming this. The outstanding research work of Academician Vasilyevsky justifies the inclusion of this highly interesting legend in our annals.

Leaving aside the question as to which people or peoples lived in "Scythia" in the first century, we have every rea-



son to presume that Christianity was preached there at an early date although it only became the dominant religion much later.

There is no doubt that the Greeks tried to spread Christianity among their neighbours, and we have reason to believe that the Greek preachers turned their attention to the Tivertsy, Ulichy and Polyane earlier than to other Eastern Slavs. In the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan (101-107 A.D.) the territory which was somewhat later occupied by the Ulichy and the Tivertsy fell under the control of the Roman Empire. (It is not surprising that Slav and Rus legends mention Trajan. The *Lay of Igor's Host* even calls the Russian land the "land of Trajan.") This territory became a part of the trans-Danube Lower Misia where Christianity was known as far back as the 2nd century A.D. In the 3rd century, after the departure of the Romans, the Tivertsy and Ulichy maintained direct contact with Lower Misia which was known as "Little Scythia." A bishopric was in existence in the city of Tomi as early as Diocletian's reign (284-305 A.D.). A Greek Christian colony, Tira, and other Greek colonies were located near the mouth of the Dniester. Constantine Porphyrogenitus reports that in his time the ruins of six towns with fragments of churches and crosses carved in stone could still be seen on the lower Dnieper. The author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* considered it important to note that cities existed among the Tivertsy and Ulichy even in his day. ("Their cities stand even to this day.")

During the reign of the Emperor Justinian (527-565) the Ulichy and the Tivertsy maintained regular intercourse with Byzantium, either serving with the Byzantine troops or, together with other Slavs, attacking the Empire. Even though the Polyane were not direct neighbours of the Greeks they were in very close contact with them. The entire southern part of our country up to the Don was called Scythia by the Greeks, and Sarmatia by the Romans, while Church writers of the 3rd-5th centuries—Teartullian (died 240),

Athanasius of Alexandria (died 373), John Chrysostom (died 405) and Ieronim (died 420)—considered Scythia, or Sarmatia, to be one of the countries where Christianity had already been established. "The chill of Scythia flames with the fervour of faith" (Ieronim).

It is impossible, of course, to infer from this the extent to which Christianity had penetrated "Scythia" and been accepted by the Slavonic peoples of Rus, but there can be no doubt that they were acquainted with the state religion of the Empire and to a certain extent with Christian teaching.

Nor do we have any doubt whatsoever regarding the statement of the Constantinople Patriarch Photius<sup>1</sup> to the effect that Rus<sup>2</sup> "had changed her Hellenic profane, heathen teachings... for the pure and genuine Christian faith." It follows, then, that Christianity had made considerable headway in Rus even before it gained official recognition as the dominant state religion.

It stands to reason that Christianity was of necessity bound up with the introduction of books. But the art of writing was known in Rus before the adoption of Christianity.

Religious services were conducted in the Greek language, but it may be assumed that Slavonic was to some extent used, and, after the brothers Kirill and Methodius had completed their work, services were conducted wholly in Slavonic, and, consequently, from Slavonic books. The biography of Kirill contains a statement that he met a certain "Russian" in Korsun and saw the Gospel and the Psalter written "in the Russian language"—a fact which has greatly perplexed scholars. I think the statement should be accepted literally. It is quite possible that the man was indeed a Russian and that the books were written in the Russian language. We merely lack information as to the alphabet used

<sup>1</sup> Photius was Patriarch twice: between 858 and 867, and between 878 and 886. His mention of Rus refers to 866. By that time Kirill (827-869) had already completed his work on the Slav alphabet.

<sup>2</sup> Nikita of Paphlagonia (9th century), speaking of the invasion of Tsargrad (Constantinople) by Rus in the 9th century, called Rus a "Scythian people."



in these books. The chronicle of Bishop Christin mentions a Russian chronicle (in Russian) written with the aid of the Greek alphabet.<sup>1</sup> In anycase, the need for a written language had appeared in Rus long before, and a number of reports, which are, it is true, not very clear, point to the fact that the Russians knew the art of writing before Christianity was recognized as a state religion among them.

The treaties with the Greeks, drawn up in the Greek language, were at the time translated and written in Russian. Oleg's treaty with the Greeks mentions written wills drawn up by Russians. Igor's treaty lists deeds with which the Rus prince was to supply the boats he sent to Greece. Ibn Fadhlān saw an inscription over the grave of a distinguished Rus. Ibn Al-Nedim saw a Rus inscription on a piece of wood. The monk Khrabr, speaking of the Slavonic people in general, makes the following undated comment: "Formerly, the Slavs, being heathens, did not have their own letters, but used special signs to read and divine the future." This comment in respect of a written language of the Slavs before they adopted Christianity may apply to the 8th century, for in the 9th century the Western and Southern Slavs were officially recognized Christians.

In 1949, the Soviet archaeologist D. A. Avdusin made an interesting discovery in his excavations of the Gnezdovskie Barrows near Smolensk. It is an inscription on an earthenware vessel dating to the first quarter of the 10th century. It has been deciphered as *gorukhshcha* (горухша), or *gorushna* (горушна), meaning spice. It reminds one of the Bulgarian inscriptions of the 10th century.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, the Slavs used Latin and Greek characters. "Roman and Greek characters had to be used but this was

<sup>1</sup> И. Жданов, Русский былевой эпос, СПб. 1895, стр. 99, Примечание. (I. Zhdanov, *Russian True-to-Life Epic Tales*, St. Petersburg, 1895, p. 99., Note.)

<sup>2</sup> Д. А. Авдусин и М. Н. Тихомиров, Древнейшая русская надпись ("Вестник Академии наук", вып. 4, 1950, стр. 71—79). (D. A. Avdusin and M. N. Tikhomirov, *The Earliest Russian Inscriptions. Vestnik Akademii Nauk*, Issue 4, 1950, pp. 71-79.)

inconvenient." "...And thus it went on for many years," Khrabr adds, and directly explains in what respect it was "inconvenient": "How can one write correctly, in Greek characters, such Slavonic words as *bogh*, or *zhivot*, or *tserkov*, or *chayanie*, or *shirota*..." (God, life, church, hope, breadth). In fact, the Greek and Latin alphabets lack many symbols to designate Slavonic sounds. Kirill and Methodius eliminated this obvious flaw. Kirill "created thirty-eight characters some of which resemble Greek letters, others being for Slavonic sounds."

It would appear, then, that Kirill did not introduce a written language but merely created a Slavonic alphabet. A written language had existed before his day. Christianity which had long been known among the Slavs, and, in particular, among the Eastern Slavs, merely increased the need for a written language and undoubtedly hastened the development of the Slavs' own alphabet.

Rome had always regarded Rus as a tempting morsel. When Vladimir, after taking Korsun, negotiated with the Greeks about the hierarchic structure of the Russian Church, the Pope sent his own envoys to Korsun to keep Vladimir from entering into an ecclesiastical alliance with the Greeks and to win Rus over to his side. Although the mission failed, Rome did not consider its cause completely lost and made two more attempts during the reign of Vladimir. Rome sent envoys to Vladimir in the years 991 and 1000.

The papal mission of 991 was accompanied by envoys from the Polish and Czech kings, and the second mission, in the year 1000, by envoys from the Czech and Hungarian kings. It will be recalled that the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* says that Vladimir lived "in peace with the neighbouring princes, with Boleslav of Poland and the Hungarian Stephen and Andrei of Czechia, and there was peace and friendship among them." (*Lavrenty Annals* for 996.) Therefore, this concerted effort on the part of Rus's western neighbours to win her over to their side becomes clear. Vladimir sent his own envoys on return missions to Rome in 994 and 1001.



The mission of 1000 was sent to Kiev by Pope Sylvester II, tutor to Emperor Otto III, the nephew of Vladimir's wife Anna (his mother was Anna's sister). It appears that Rus's intercourse with the West and Byzantium was then very vigorous, and the Pope and the Western Catholic rulers might have had many plans in connection with Vladimir. But Rus had a policy of her own and preferred to remain loyal to her alliance with the Greeks. The first Russian Metropolitan, the Greek Leon, who was in office when the papal envoys arrived, even wrote an indictment against the Latins to justify Vladimir's behaviour.

The tale about the trial of faiths told by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is not far removed from reality. Numerous missions from various countries—even on religious matters—are a more than likely phenomenon.

Rus preferred to turn to Byzantium, considering this to be more advantageous than submission to Rome. Did she lose anything thereby? This is by no means a new question for Russian scholars; it is one of the so-called "eternal" problems. I shall not discuss the subject, except to emphasize one aspect of it. There is no doubt that the Byzantine Church was more tolerant than the Roman. In contrast to the latter, it permitted the existence of national Churches and gave them considerably more independence. This could not but have its effect on the civilization of the countries which evaded the levelling hand of the Vatican.

It is a curious fact that the very same Czech-Moravians, whose king tried to prevail upon Vladimir to unite Rus with Rome, had, more than a century earlier, while within the bosom of the Catholic Church, themselves appealed to Byzantium with a request to translate the Greek prayer books into the Slavonic. In other words, they were faced with the vital problem of establishing their own national Church.

The view of Golubinsky, a historian of the Russian Church, that Kirill must be credited with taking the initiative in this affair, despite the wishes of the Greeks and the

complete inertness of the Moravians, lacks conviction. How could it have been possible to send an outstanding Greek scholar, versed in the Slavonic, to Moravia for such a definite purpose without the desire of the Moravians themselves and without the collaboration of Byzantium? We are aware that Kirill's activities in Moravia were also a clarion call for other Slavs, and above all, chronologically speaking, for the Slavonic Prince Kotsel of Pannonia, a vassal of the German Emperor.

Be that as it may, Christianity which had been adopted from the Greeks, but which at the same time had not been completely isolated from the West, proved in the end to be neither Byzantine nor Roman, but Russian. And the Russification of the Christian precept and of the Christian Church began at an early date and developed in two directions. The struggle for their own national church was carried on by the upper classes of Russian society; the princes, as well as the aristocracy that surrounded them, the higher clergy and various church institutions took part in it. The people as a whole waged a struggle for their own faith, often coming out in defence of their old beliefs under the leadership of their soothsayers, preserving these beliefs in everyday life, in spite of all the preachings of the Christian clergy and the pressure brought to bear upon them by the authorities. Both these trends, in the final analysis, led to the same result.

Towards the end of the 11th century, i.e., a century after the official recognition of Byzantine Christianity, the Russian ecclesiastical and temporal authorities introduced a holiday—the transference of the relics of St. Nicholas—Nikolai Chudotvoretz (the Worker of Miracles)—a holiday accepted neither in Byzantium nor in the Roman Catholic Church, but recognized by the Pope only as a local holiday in Bari. In this the Russian Church manifested its own attitude towards Nikolai, who had long been very popular in Rus. At a very early date statesmen and church leaders began to put into effect a comprehensive programme of canonizing their own Russian "saints." It is characteristic that the first



Russian saints were exalted, as Golubinsky very correctly points out, "for political reasons which had nothing to do with faith," and in face of opposition by the official head of the Russian Church, the Metropolitan Georgy who, it is true, was a Greek by birth and a Byzantian by persuasion.

The authorities clearly strove to have their Church independent of Byzantium. This is evident from the status of the first Greek Metropolitans sent to Rus from Byzantium. In Rus they encountered a manifest desire for independence.

We do not know precisely under what conditions the Greek clergy came to Rus in Vladimir's time, but it is clear that Vladimir himself took measures to train an adequate number of educated people and thus make it unnecessary for him to turn to Byzantium on every occasion. These measures were very successful, and Yaroslav, Vladimir's son, made an attempt to replace the Greek Metropolitan with his own Russian candidate.

The *Laurenty Annals* contain the following brief entry for 1051: "Yaroslav, having assembled the bishops in the St. Sophia Cathedral, appointed Hilarion the Rusin as Metropolitan." The *Ipaty Annals* use the term Rus instead of Rusin. But the meaning of both entries is the same. Yaroslav, acting on his own initiative, assembled the bishops and proposed his own candidate for the post of Metropolitan. The bishops, who undoubtedly included Greeks, were forced to support his nominee.

His candidate was Hilarion, a most learned and talented Russian, a priest of the prince's suburban manor of Berestovo. After Yaroslav's death Hilarion was again replaced by a Greek, Ephraim, who seemingly aroused protests from the Russian bishops. Luka Zhidyata, a Novgorod bishop, made some "indecorous speeches" for which, denounced by his servant, he was condemned by Ephraim.

The second attempt to appoint a Russian as Metropolitan was made in that very troublous and politically difficult time of the struggle between the Monomakh and Oleg families. The Monomakhs firmly adhered to a

national policy, and in 1147 Grand Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich, grandson of Vladimir Monomakh, "independently of the Greeks, with six bishops, appointed Klim, a Russian monk, as Metropolitan." (*Laurenty Annals*.) The *Ipaty Annals* contain the following details: "Izyaslav appointed Klim as Metropolitan, a hermit from Zarub in the Smolensk principality. He was a scholar and philosopher, the likes of whom were not known in the Russian land." Once again the initiative came from the prince. He was vigorously supported by the Bishop of Chernigov, Onufry. The other bishops were also in favour of this candidate, with the exception of Manuil of Smolensk (a Greek) and Nifont of Novgorod. The latter, it is true, was dissatisfied not so much with the candidate himself as with the fact that he had not been approved by the Greek Patriarch (the Patriarch opposed this act). Onufry of Chernigov, apparently with the support of the prince, found it possible to get along without the Patriarch's blessing by referring to the presence in Kiev of the relics of St. Kliment, which, in his opinion, was sufficient to invest the new Metropolitan with full powers: did not the Greeks themselves appeal to the relics in such cases? Most of the bishops agreed with this reasoning: "So they decided . . . and appointed a Metropolitan with the wisdom of St. Kliment." (*Ipaty Annals*.)

But the matter did not rest there. Those were stormy times. Events developed rapidly reverberating in Western Europe and Byzantium. As soon as Yury Dolgoruky, an enemy of Izyaslav, temporarily occupied Kiev, he banished Kliment. In 1150, Izyaslav twice drove Yury from the throne, and Metropolitan Kliment twice returned with him to Kiev, where he remained until Izyaslav's death on November 13, 1154.

Yury was sent another Metropolitan from Constantinople—the Greek Constantine. He began his activities in Kiev by anathematizing the late Prince Izyaslav together with the Russian clergy appointed by Kliment.



Yury died a year later and the Kiev throne was occupied by the son of the anathematized Izyaslav. Metropolitan Constantine had to flee for his life. Kliment was about to be sent for once again, but there were obstacles in the way of his return. The struggle had become very acute and the Kiev prince was compelled to compromise: on the insistence of the Byzantine Emperor he accepted the Greek candidate in Kliment's stead, but, according to Tatishchev who could not have invented this fact, although he may have reproduced it in a biased manner, the prince firmly declared that if in the future the Patriarch were to appoint a Metropolitan without the knowledge and approval of the Kiev prince, he would not accept the candidate and in general radically change the attitude of the Russian Church towards the Constantinople Patriarch.

This was an obvious attempt to Russify the ecclesiastical authorities by making them politically independent of Byzantium.

Another trend in the same direction, equally important and much more potent, was that manifested by the people who, although they had accepted the new faith from Byzantium, had not forgotten the old one with which their everyday life was profoundly infused. The new faith could not entirely oust what was an inherent part of the people itself. One's way of life is never borrowed, it is gradually built up and it becomes perfectly clear how it was "built up" at this new stage, absorbing and transforming the new elements within itself.

The *Lay About How in the Beginning People Were Heathens and Worshipped Idols* contains a very characteristic passage which reflects the spirit of Russian life in the 11th century. It speaks of the Slavs and primarily, of course, of the Russians: "After the Holy Baptism they renounced Peroun and accepted Christ, but even today in the borderlands they pray to him, the accursed god Peroun and to Khors and Mokosh, and Vil, and do this in secret. They cannot give up the accursed custom of dedicating

additional meals to Rod and Rozhanitsas...." That is, the cult of the old gods long continued to exist side by side with the Christian faith, which had as yet not taken firm root among the people even in such cities as Novgorod, to say nothing of the remoter areas ("in the borderlands"). Paganism, which the people themselves evolved in the course of centuries, was a religion which had arisen in a classless society and did not sanctify elements of class oppression as did later religions. Paganism, therefore, could not vanish overnight. Man was intent on divining the future; he sought help in his struggle against nature, believing it possible to influence nature in some mysterious manner. Hence his belief in fortune-telling, signs and portents and sorcery against which the Christian preachers fought in vain.

Man is accustomed to note and to hearken: "the house cracks, one's ear rings, the crow caws, the cock crows, the eye winks, the fire rages, the dog howls, the mouse squeaks, the mouse gnaws, the toad croaks, the cat meows, a dream terrifies, one meets a monk, one meets a hog, the fire hisses," etc. Such is the endless list of pagan signs and portents given by the "false books" (the Apocrypha). The soothsayers and sorcerers possessed the secret of divining the future and changing man's fate.

The Russian could not give up his beliefs all at once, even if the Christian ideas had penetrated into the very heart of the people. But such was not the case, Christianity spread slowly from the cities to the manors and villages merging with the habitual ways of thought and sentiment. The old and new scholars insisted that the two faiths existed side by side, but there was no such thing in actual fact. It was a syncretic religion which resulted from the introduction of the Christian faith among the Russian people, in other words, its Russification.

The Russian holidays illustrate this fact unequivocally. The annual pagan holidays were closely intertwined with the Christian. The celebration of the New Year, of spring,



bore the Roman name of Calendae—*Kolyada*—and coincided with Christmas. The ritual side of the celebrations remained purely pagan: on Christmas Eve the Bulgarians, Serbs, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and the people in many parts of Russia proper until quite recently held a ritual repast symbolizing an invocation for abundance and welfare in the coming year. Yuletide fortune-telling was practised between Christmas and the Epiphany.

Shrovetide, which was not recognized by the Christian Church, continued to exist on its own. The summer holiday was connected with the feast of John the Baptist. The purely Christian Holiday of Easter was combined with the holiday of the Sun and Peroun. In some parts of Russia Holy Week is called "thunder week," there being a belief that thunder during the Holy Week presages a bumper crop. Peroun, the God of Thunder, was replaced by the Prophet Ilya. It was he who ousted Zeus in Greece. The holiday of Yarila (the sacred last meal before Lent) also continued, although the *Stoglav*<sup>1</sup> fought against it. The holiday of Lada (Foma Sunday) also persisted. Friday was made a holiday in honour of Lada, a custom long preserved in the Ukraine, where the weekly holiday was Friday rather than Sunday even as late as the 16th century, whence the veneration of St. Paraskeva Friday among the Russians.

The "evil spirits" which corresponded to the pagan gods of evil that brought misfortunes upon people were completely fused with the Russified Christian conceptions. Witches and sorcerers, the agents of the evil spirits, remained part of the life of the people in spite of the campaign against them.

Pagan ritual became fixed in the numerous survivals of everyday life.

Nowhere is the memory of the old pagan beliefs of

<sup>1</sup> *Stoglav*—a collection of decisions of the Stoglav Church Assembly of 1551. It consists of 100 chapters, hence its name: *sto glav*—a hundred chapters.—*Tr.*

every section of the Russian people so strikingly reflected as in the *Lay of Igor's Host*. Its author was undoubtedly a Christian, for he glorified the princes and their men-at-arms "who fought for the Christians against the heathen troops," contrasting the Christians with the "unholy," and directed his hero, who fled from captivity, to the "Holy Virgin of Pirogoshchaya." At the same time he was imbued with the old Russian traditions: he called the Russian people the grandchildren of Dazhbog; Boyan the grandson of Veles; the winds—the grandchildren of Stribog. His view of the political events was his own, differing from the views of the Church. He had no idea of sin and ascribed Rus's calamities to princely internecine strife and not to God's punishment.

Christianity was absorbed by the Russians in a peculiar manner, like everything they adopted. The ability of the Russian people to create their own culture and to transform what they adopted from other peoples is reflected in the fate of the Christian religion in Rus no less strikingly than in the Slavonization of the Varangians and other peoples.

This ability of the Russian people to assimilate and to transform what they assimilated is strikingly revealed in art.

There is scarcely another land in mediaeval times where there were as many cultural cross currents as in Rus. Byzantium, the peoples of the East and the Caucasus, Western Europe and Scandinavia ringed Rus round. Persian fabrics, Arabian silver, Chinese fabrics, Syrian articles, Egyptian crockery, Byzantine brocades, Frankish swords and other things came to Rus, and needless to say, served not only as objects of use by the rich classes but also as models of style in art.

These elements were transformed by the artistic genius of Rus and became part of indigenous Russian art. The explanation of this indisputable fact lies in the antiquity and stability of the Russian people's own traditions.



The idols, altars, princely palaces, the large and beautiful buildings, city walls and towers were created in accordance with a definite system, technique and style.

The style of the stone buildings which appeared later is intrinsically connected with the canons of the pre-stone period. Painting of a sort was also known in pre-Christian times. A later report says that heathen Rus "prays to images drawn after human likenesses." A specimen of pagan sculpture has been preserved in a cave on the bank of the Buzh, which empties into the Dniester. There is a large intricate relief on its wall, depicting a kneeling man praying before a holy tree with a cock perched on it. To one side of him there is a deer which may possibly be a sacrifice offered up by the man. Above, in a special frame, there is an undeciphered inscription. The entire composition is manifestly antique.

When Greek engineers and artists arrived in Kiev, following the adoption of Christianity as the state religion, they had to take into consideration and conform with the tastes of the princes and the Russian aristocracy, who had their own opinion about what the costly edifices in the capital should look like.

Neither in Byzantium nor in the West could one find temples with a great number of cupolas. It was a purely Russian phenomenon, the heritage of wooden architecture applied to stone structures. The first St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod was of oak and had 13 cupolas. The Kiev Sophia which was of stone also had 13. The Desyatinnaya Church, likewise of stone, had 25. This ancient tradition long persisted in wooden architecture and, incidentally, has come down to us in a wooden 23-domed church in the Kizhsky Pogost. The fusion of East and West in a unique Russian form may be seen in the Chernigov Spas Cathedral.

The same may be seen in painting. Wherever Russian artists studied they chiefly adopted the technique and were interested in the style, but they employed foreign patterns and their acquired skills in an original way. A collection

of philosophical treatises compiled in 1073 for Prince Svyatoslav, one of Yaroslav's sons, has preserved a group portrait of Svyatoslav and his family made in the style of Byzantine family groups of owners or buyers of books. But all the members of the prince's family are pictured in Russian attire. The Greek artist, who painted Yaroslav and his family in the Kiev Sophia, had naturally to take account of the characteristic Russian national features of the prince's court.

Apart from these two portraits of the princely family we should note an interesting portrait of Princess Olga before the Byzantine Emperor made in fresco on the stairs of the Kiev Sophia.<sup>1</sup>

Back in the 11th century Kiev icon painters had spread their highly developed art throughout all of Rus—to Kholm of Galich, to Rostov, Suzdal and Vladimir. The artists of Kiev Rus created images of Russian "saints"—Boris, Gleb, Antony, Feodosy, Vladimir and Olga. The first portraits mentioned in the literary sources have not come down to us. However, similar copies of such portraits, dating to the 12th and 13th centuries, have been preserved. They represent a Russian version of the Byzantine iconography and style. Such are the frescoes of Princes Boris and Gleb in the baptistery of the Kiev Sophia, Boris in the Uspensky Cathedral in Old Ladoga, Olga and Vladimir on the outer fresco of the Spaso-Nareditskaya Church in Novgorod, Antony and Feodosy on the 13th-century icon of Our Lady of Pechera, etc. As early as the 12th century these same artists created original art groups on topics unknown in Byzantium. One of these is the depiction of the Protection of Our Lady which has come down to us on one of the emblems of the 13th-century

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<sup>1</sup> Д. В. Айналов, История древнего искусства (Киев-Царьград-Херсонес) („Известия Таврической ученой архивной комиссии" № 57, Симферополь 1919, стр. 202). (D. V. Ainalov, *A History of Ancient Art. Kiev-Constantinople-Chersonesus*, *Izvestia Tavricheskoi Uchonoï Arkhivnoi Komissii*, No. 57, Simferopol, 1919, p. 202.)



Suzdal Gates and in a Suzdal icon entitled "The Protection of Our Lady."<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of Russian painters to the image of St. Nicholas is very indicative. This pure-blooded Greek, under the brush of the Russian masters, became a typical Russian old man markedly lacking in any of his own national features.

We find Byzantine, Sassanian, Armenian, Georgian and Roman features in the works of architects, painters and book illuminators, but they are all treated in a specifically Russian manner.

The same is true of the language.

We find a reflection of the earliest Russian language in the *Russkaya Pravda*. By that time it had accumulated a certain wealth in the means of description. It was the language of the masses, simple and clear, but at the same time it had already developed definite etymological and syntactical forms.

Such a language feared no "influences" whatsoever. It could acquire new words and phrases without in the least losing its national character.

Original Bulgarian books or translations abounding in Bulgarian idiom had an influence on the Russian literary language. Many of these idioms became a part of the language of educated people and, in part, of the masses, but they did not change its Russian character. The language of the ancient masterpiece, the *Lay of Igor's Host*, has its roots deep in the oral poetic tradition of the people upon which the author drew for his remarkable imagery, epithets, similes and metaphors.

There is another very important fact. The Russian literary language, with the peculiarities of the folk dialects, took a firm root over the vast territory of Rus. From the icebound shores of the northern seas to the Black Sea shores, basking in the southern sun, from the Carpathians

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<sup>1</sup> For these reports I am indebted to V. I. Antonova.

to the Volga and the Oka, wherever the Russians lived—in legal documents and historical reports, in poetry and in prose—one finds the same precise, flexible and picturesque language.

It is also noteworthy that the Russian who could wield the pen was able to select a form of expression to conform with his thoughts and feelings.

The Superior Daniil, who kept a diary of his voyage to Jerusalem (1106-07), declared his intention to write "not ornately but simply." In other words, he deliberately rejected the florid style. But his patriotic feeling is more forceful than any literary embellishment. How simple and touching is his address to King Baldwin, the then ruler of Jerusalem: "Lord Prince! I pray thee, for the sake of God and the Russian princes, allow me also to place my candle over the sepulchre of the Lord for all our princes and for our entire land, for all the Christians of the Russian land." This he was allowed to do.

As intended, the official adoption of Christianity unquestionably led to closer relations between Rus and the Christian peoples. This intercourse, like the Christian precept itself, undoubtedly introduced much that was novel to Russian society. It gave much food for thought and was undoubtedly a milestone in the history of Russian culture. All that is quite true. It should be remembered, however, that the Christian precept and the attendant demands to refashion certain aspects of life were no mere transplantation of something foreign to a new soil, but were accepted as a need which had matured within Russian society capable of independently selecting what it required at the moment for further cultural progress. It would be extremely naïve to think that the Greek clergy taught the Russian people to think and develop their culture.

The creation of a Slavonic alphabet and the translation of Greek books were highly beneficial to Rus. Yet this was by no means the birth of Russian culture. Even before the appearance of a written language, and for some time after



its appearance, there existed a culture which has often been undeservedly ignored.

And yet, how can one explain, for instance, the preservation for remote descendants of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, of thousands of facts concerning various aspects of the life of the people, other than by the fact that every people has its own culture dating back to a period before the appearance of a written language, a period which is of great interest and deserves the most serious examination?

Here is what Caesar writes of the Gallic Druids: they were exempt from state services, including military service and taxes. Their duties included prolonged studies which lasted about 20 years. They had to memorize in verse the sum total of knowledge in astronomy and geography, natural science and theology. This they had to hand on to their pupils. They considered it inadmissible to resort to writing because they did not want this knowledge to find its way to the people at large, and because that which was written down was sooner forgotten. (Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, lib. VI, cap. XIV.) Seneca said the same thing several decades later: "*Certior est memoria, quae nullum extra se subsidium habet.*" (Ep., 88, 28.)

It is noteworthy that everything they had to memorize was versified, since verse is more readily remembered: a word cannot be left out of a song.

Before the written language was evolved, a definite cycle of songs served as history. Some peoples had knotted cords to date the events. They were the prototypes of our modern rosaries, and our habit of tying a knot as an aid to memory is a survival of this.

The main aim of oral composition on historical topics was to preserve for the people the memory of their heroes, their names and feats. Much attention was devoted to the genealogy of the heroes which gradually evolved into a chronicle of events connected with certain historical figures. Court feasts were usually attended by bards—story-tellers who glorified the princes and kings, present and past.

This was a universal phenomenon and the Ante-Rus were by no means an exception.

We are concerned not so much with the fact that there existed poets and bards who dealt with historical topics, as with the subject-matter of their historical songs, *bylinas* and tales. Interest in one's past, the need to link the past and the present are features which indicate a certain level of civilization and of man's awareness that he belongs to an ethnical and political whole.

Information about the Ante story-tellers (*skaziteli*) dates back to a remote past.

Theophanes, the Byzantine chronicler (751-818), reports that in 583 the Greeks captured three Slavs "without any coats of mail and with only psalteries...<sup>1</sup> These Slavs declared that they carried the psaltery and did not know how to wear armour, because their country had no iron. Mauricius (the emperor—*Author*) marvelled at their height, complimented them on their majestic appearance, and sent them to Heracleia." These psalterers said that it took them 18 months to walk from their homeland, which was located "on the shore of the Western ocean."

It is hard to say from what part of the Baltic area they had come, but it is quite clear that they were psalterers and singers, since songs were usually sung to the accompaniment of a psaltery.

As regards Rus herself, apart from the *bylinas*, songs and tales which have now been written down, we also have definite information about the names of the masters of this art.

Boyan, the famous "nightingale of olden times," sang

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<sup>1</sup> The psaltery is an instrument common to all the Slavs: Ancient Russian—*зѣсѣб*; Serb. and Bulg.—*зѣсѣ*; Horv.—*gusle*; Slovene—*gosle*; Czech—*housle*; Pol.—*gęsle*. Among the Poles *gęsle* denotes also a song or verse (Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego*, Part II, pp. 40-41); "God's song in verse (Psalter)," Grig. Naz. 11th century; "Sing God in verse (Psalter)," Pand. Ant. 11th century; "Songs and verses (Psalter)," Georgy Amartola; "Euphrous Frachevsky, a teller of verse (Psalter)," Chronicle of Malala, etc. (I. I. Sreznevsky, *Materials for a Dictionary of the Ancient Rus Language*, Vol. I, p. 610.)



his songs to the accompaniment of the psaltery, composing them in honour of historical figures famed for their deeds. "When he wanted to sing in someone's honour, he sent ten falcons at a flock of swans . . . and sang a song of old Yaroslav, the valiant Mstislav . . . the handsome Roman Svyatoslavich." Boyan's lively strings "sang the glory of the princes." Although the unknown author of the *Lay of Igor's Host* set himself the task of singing according to "the *bylinas* of our time and not according to Boyan's imagination," that is, he wanted to be more concrete than Boyan, who gave full vent to his poetic imagination, he was essentially the same type of singer of historical events and great people. It is easy to guess how this task was accomplished. It may be said without exaggeration that history itself marched in poetic form before the audiences of the bards, who displayed a profound grasp of events, gave fine character sketches of statesmen and had a keen appreciation of men and events.

We shall not be much mistaken if we assume that Boyan, his contemporaries and his predecessors just as carefully watched the course of events, singled out the outstanding facts and passed them on in song form to those who were concerned with their past and present.

After the victory of Daniil of Galich over the Yatvyags, the victorious hero was extolled by contemporary bards ("they were glorified in song," i.e., Daniil and his father, Roman). The "famous bard" Mitus, who was carried away as a captive by Daniil from the ruler of Peremyshl, refused to sing before his captor ("his pride would not let him serve Prince Daniil"). It is true that this happened in the 13th century, but it is a part of an old tradition that existed parallel to the written language. There must have been similar songs about Bozh (Bus), and about Oleg, and Svyatoslav, just as there had been songs about others at a much earlier date.

The bards composed songs and sang them because the subject-matter of their compositions attracted audiences,

arousing interest in the feats of their heroes. In this manner was the history of Rus compiled and preserved before the existence of a written language. If the collection of Russian epos had started earlier, we should have had incomparably more striking indications of the profound patriotism of the masses, their close attention to history and their ability correctly to assess men and events.

Our first historians, the chroniclers, fully appreciated the great significance of oral legends handed down in the form of historical songs, tales and *bylinas*, and attempted to summarize the material at their command to satisfy the political and cultural interests of their contemporaries.

"The Kiev folk saga," writes Kluchevsky, "can be clearly traced as one of the basic sources of the symposium (*Chronicle of Ancient Years—Author*) covering the 9th and the whole of the 10th century; its traces are noticeable even in the beginning of the 11th century in the story of Vladimir's struggle against the Pechenegs. From the fragments of the Kiev *bylinas* preserved in the symposium one can infer that, by the middle of the 11th century, an entire cycle of historico-poetical legends had been composed in Kiev Rus, their main subject being Rus's campaigns against Byzantium."<sup>1</sup> If Kluchevsky had confined himself to the dates he indicates here, I should be compelled to suggest a correction. However, a few pages later he himself points out that even the earlier, "pre-Kiev period" has been preserved for us in these very songs. We hear "the distant echo of a whole cycle of Slavonic songs about the Avars, which were composed in the Carpathian mountains." (*Tale About the Obry*, late 6th and early 7th centuries.—*Author.*)<sup>2</sup>

There is no need at this time to elaborate on certain passages in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* which can be traced to songs and *bylinas*. There are many such places: the tale about Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv, Olga's revenge,

<sup>1</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part I, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.



Vladimir's feasts, the taking of Korsun, Vladimir's marriage to Rogneda, the single combat between Mstislav and Rededya, a character sketch of Svyatoslav, etc. Our students of literature have even discovered fragments of verse in the annals, which are derived from oral sources. It is not only plausible but very natural for oral verse to exercise such an influence upon written prose. Our first historians, the chroniclers, regarded folk tales as quite acceptable raw material in compiling a truthful description of the past and quoted them as proof of their statements. This was the case not only in Rus. A missionary who knew the life of the Polynesians well observes that their old songs were "a kind of unquestionable classical authority to which they referred to establish every controversial fact in their history." The same is true for the Scandinavian sagas.

In the period when the written language was not so widespread the poet was much more important as historian than in later times, and incomparably greater ability was required of the illiterate poet-historian than of the literate "recorders" of individual facts. It is easy to understand why the latter did not appeal to the Muses: for only "to people of lofty spirit did Zeus send inspiration." A record of events could, on the other hand, be kept by a person without any talent whatsoever.

Lest I be accused of making unfounded statements, I wish to quote an excerpt from the Frankish annals of the St. Amanda Monastery.

687. War of Pipin in Testry, where he conquered the Franks.

688, 689, 690...701 (no entry).

702. Death of King Hildebert.

703-707 (no entries).

708. Death of Drogon in spring.

709. Pipin set out for Swabia against Vilary.

710. Pipin again went to Swabia against Vilary, etc.

Similar records were kept in Rus long before the first

general history of Russia was compiled. This was required by the prince's court, the centre from which the prince ruled Rus and the place where domestic and foreign policy was shaped.

Our students of the chronicles have long held that brief entries of major events were initially made independent of each other. These facts were recorded and kept in the princely chancellery like other state documents required for the drafting of current policy.

It is difficult to determine the date when this practice began. What can be said with certainty, however, is that it had been well established since the days when the state power in the large political centres had been consolidated and particularly since Kiev became the capital of the great Russian state—that is, from the second half of the 9th century.

As Rus's international contacts were extended, and as the apparatus and technique of administration grew more intricate, the need for an exact record of political events must have become increasingly more pressing. Special calendars were kept both here and in the West, the facts being entered under the corresponding years. There is reason to believe that every new Kiev prince started new records of his own.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* seems to imply this definitely. An entry for 915, for instance, declares: "The Pechenegs came to Rus for the first time." The entry for 968 repeats this, so that it appears that the Pechenegs twice came to Rus "for the first time." I believe Sreznevsky very correctly explains this as being the result of two independent entries at two different times: one princely official wrote in Igor's time and the other—independently of the first—53 years later, and without apparently having taken the trouble to read through the records of his predecessor. The first appearance of the Pechenegs did not leave a great enough impression for it to be long remembered. In 915 the Pechenegs came "and concluded a peace



treaty with Igor" and went on to the Danube. Their second appearance in 968 was a serious event which threatened to nullify Svyatoslav's outstanding success in Bulgaria. On this occasion Svyatoslav dealt the Pechenegs a very telling blow.

This same *Chronicle of Ancient Years* also bears traces of some kind of summary of events, which was made for practical purposes. Special sections were introduced in the *Chronicle*: "From the death of Svyatoslav to the death of Yaroslav 85 years elapsed, and from the death of Yaroslav to the death of Svyatopolk—60." Sreznevsky presumes, not without reason, that this was an attempt by one person to sum up the events from Svyatoslav to Yaroslav and of another to do the same for the period from Yaroslav to Svyatopolk. However, this was not the first attempt of its kind, nor could it as yet be regarded as a historical work.

If this be so, what should be said about the Greeks, who, in the opinion of some, created our written history, and, in the opinion of others, taught us how to write it?

The former opinion, which is absolutely unfounded and at variance with all the facts, must be rejected. The latter requires considerable explanation.

There is no gainsaying that the Russians learned a great deal from the Greeks, and through them also became acquainted with the forms of literary productions. They began to read the Greek chroniclers at an early date. Rus studied the works of the Greek masters and used them to compile her own annals.

But this is true of form only. As far as content is concerned, the Russians at a certain stage in the development of their own civilization, like all other peoples, found it necessary, independent of any outside influence, to look back upon their past and to interpret it for themselves. This need is a very old one. At one time it was satisfied by poets, bards and the story-tellers. Now came a public order for a history of their native land, and the opportunity of fulfilling it was to hand. Specimens of this type of

literature were to be found in translations from the Greek. The preparatory work had been done long before, and the talent and inspiration were to be found among the Russian people themselves.

Whereas mere literacy was sufficient for the recording of facts, their interpretation and the creation of a systematic history of the people and the state demanded not only talent but also learning.

There were many gifted people among the Antes. The Greeks, for example, would not have entrusted the command of their fleet to a person who was incompetent: but in the middle of the 6th century, the Ante Dobrogast bore the title of "military tribune" and was in command of the Pontine fleet at a critical moment in the war between Byzantium and the Persians. This was not a mass phenomenon, of course, but it was not an isolated case either.

When and how did learned people appear in Rus, people who were equal to the task of writing a general systematized history of their country?

Ever since the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich a state school officially existed in Kiev. Immediately upon his return from the Korsun campaign Vladimir "began to take the children of the aristocracy and to give them book-learning."

"Book-learning" was not merely a knowledge of reading and writing, but a systematic education, the study of the sciences of the time. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* gives high praise to the Kiev Metropolitan Ioann II (died 1089): "He was a man who was well versed in the books and the sciences . . . and there had been no one like him before this in Rus, nor will there be any one like him after." Metropolitan Kirill II (died 1223), also a learned man, was according to the same *Chronicle* "very learned and well versed in the books of God." The *Chronicle* speaks similarly of two other Russian Metropolitans: the famous Hilarion "was a charitable, learned and pious man," while Kliment "was a scholar and philosopher the likes of whom had never lived in the Russian land." Yet, speaking of Prince Boris



Vladimirovich, Nestor is much more restrained: the prince "had been taught to read and write." He says nothing of the other's "book-learning." Metropolitan Ioann, the eunuch, who was a Greek and undoubtedly a well-learned man, is said to have been a "man unlearned, simple in mind and speech."

It is perfectly clear that "book-learning" did not signify a school where one got the elements of reading and writing, but one where a systematic course of the sciences was taught. It was not at this school that one learned to read and write. There had been literate people long before Vladimir's time. The children of the "élite"—the senior warriors, the prince's retinue, the boyars—were naturally selected for the school not to be trained as sextons nor even as ordinary priests, but to become well-educated people and statesmen, capable of maintaining intercourse with Byzantium and other countries.

In addition to this state school in Kiev, other cities offered opportunities for learning. Feodosy of Pechera, for instance, had in his childhood apparently studied in Kursk "under one of the teachers" and, as Nestor remarks (possibly with some exaggeration), "he soon mastered all the sciences," i.e., he had not merely learned to read and write, but had gone through a certain course of studies.

The report contained in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* that Yaroslav had established a state school in Novgorod may be interpreted somewhat differently. "When Yaroslav came to Novgorod he selected 300 children of church wardens and priests for instruction." Since this refers to the "children of priests" we can assume that it implied the training of an educated clergy.

The correspondence between that same Metropolitan Kliment Smolyatich, whom Prince Izyaslav Mstislavich so assiduously supported, and the Smolensk Presbyter Foma reveals how well these schools justified their existence. Foma, who was offended by the Metropolitan, sent him a message reproaching him for his vanity in pos-

ing as a philosopher. He said the Metropolitan had discarded his native writings and had turned to Homer, Aristotle and Plato. The Metropolitan did not deny the fact, but vindicated himself by explaining that he used them to get a more profound understanding of the Holy Scriptures and reveal their spirit.<sup>1</sup>

There were libraries for continuing and improving one's education as well as for self-education. They were introduced into the Russian cloisters together with the Monastic Order of Saint Theodor the Studite. A brother was appointed librarian. On his instructions the brethren reported at certain hours to read books. Some of them were engaged in copying books. While Feodosy was Superior, a monk by the name of Hilarion lived at the Pechera Monastery and was "skilled in writing books." They were bound by the monk Nikon. In the evenings Feodosy himself was wont to sit down at a corner of Nikon's table and spin the threads for the bindings. Some of the brethren had libraries of their own. The monk Grigory, a disciple of Feodosy, had no worldly possessions, but could not resist the temptation of collecting books. When his books began to vanish, he presented a part of his books to "the ruler of the town" and sold the rest in order not to tempt the thieves. The money thus received he distributed among beggars. But his craving for books persisted and he began to collect another library.

Monk Nikita while at the monastery memorized the Old Testament. Damian read books through the night, while Feodosy encouraged "reverence for books." Books were accumulated and carefully preserved. They were, of course, essential for the literary works prepared by the monastery.

<sup>1</sup> Хрисанф Лопарев, Послание митрополита Климента к смоленскому пресвитеру Фоме, СПб 1892 (Памятники древней письменности, вып. XC). (Khrisanf Loparyov, *Metropolitan Kliment's Message to Smolensk Presbyter Foma*, St. Petersburg, 1892. *Pamyatniki Drevnei Pismennosti*, Issue XC.) N. Nikolsky, *The Literary Works of Metropolitan Kliment of Smolyatich, a Writer of the 12th Century*, St. Petersburg, 1892. Golubinsky's views on this subject are not very well based (see Y. Golubinsky, *A History of the Russian Church*, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 846-47).



According to the annals, Yaroslav "placed many books in the Church of St. Sophia, which he himself had founded." He was a great lover of books and appreciated the significance of book collections. Svyatoslav, his son, filled his store-rooms with books. Prince Svyatoslav (Svyatosha) spent money from his treasury on books, which he presented to the Pechera Monastery.

Archives were preserved with equal care. The archives were kept in the Church of Iliya in Kiev. Other churches also kept records of events and people noteworthy for various reasons. The churches also kept paschal tables with notes on various happenings. The cathedrals in Kiev, Novgorod, Polotsk, Rostov and other cities had their own libraries and archives. The Kiev Sophia is of particular interest in this respect. Here, as in the Novgorod Sophia, princes were crowned, here they assembled for negotiations, and the *veche* met within its gates. With the cathedral playing such an important part, the records of the events that took place there were necessarily of a political nature.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, in the form in which it has come down to us, is a production on which several generations of chroniclers worked, editing and continuing the work of their predecessors. Each of them was a product of his time and circumstances, but they were all children of one motherland, and all replied, in essence, to one question: how did this great state, "known and heard of in every corner of the world," originate?

But before such a question could be posed the state itself had to grow up and take its place in the world. Only a people which had become aware of its own significance could create a work worthy of itself.

The state of Ancient Rus—the cradle of the Great Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples—was the result of prolonged historical development which had its beginnings in historical obscurity, but which began to take clear shape from the 6th century A.D.

When Oleg declared Kiev "the mother of Russian cities," Rus already had a rich past. She could tell of the Novgorod Slavs and the non-Slav peoples of the Baltic, of the established intercourse of the Slavs with the Arabs and the neighbouring Scandinavian countries, at times peaceful, at others hostile. Even more could be told of Kiev as one of the oldest Russian cities, of its international position along the route from the highly civilized East to the West, of its ties with Byzantium, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, of its first princes, of Varangian attempts to secure possession of this large centre on the Dnieper, and so forth. But all these interesting and important facts were, in the eyes of our first historians, the chroniclers, of minor importance in comparison with the unification of Rus into a single state under the leadership of the Ryurik dynasty. Rather, it was the Igor dynasty, for the genealogy leading down to Ryurik was very obscurely and artificially established in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, and was entirely ignored by Metropolitan Hilarion. This event was so emphatically stressed in the works of our first historians, the chroniclers, who worked under the direct supervision of this same dynasty and in its interests—which, the chroniclers were convinced, were inseparable from the interests of the nation—that for a long time it hypnotized later historians who, without any justification, overlooked the earlier period of Russian history. Such was the influence of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, such was the force of tradition.

The achievements of archaeology, ethnography, philology and the criticism of written sources have shattered this "tradition" completely. Today, when we read the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, we discover new meaning and interpret it otherwise than it was done by Schlözer, Karamzin and even Solovyov.

Far from contradicting our modern concepts of Rus history, the *Chronicle* undoubtedly confirms them.

The awareness of a brilliant past and of marked suc-



cesses in culture and politics could not but give rise to a feeling of pride in one's country and people.

Between the 6th and 12th centuries, among Russian and non-Russian authors, friends and foes, the consensus of opinion is that the Slavs, and later the Russians, were a numerous and mighty people with great potentialities and equally great achievements.

The chronicler's words are full of conviction when he says: "Whom does God love as much as he loves us? Whom has he honoured as he has glorified and elevated us? No one." The Russian land is "the most honoured and the most enlightened."

This is echoed by Metropolitan Hilarion in his *Discourse*: "Let us also extol, to the best of our modest abilities, the great and remarkable teacher and preceptor, the great lord of our land, Vladimir, the grandson of old Igor, and the son of valiant Svyatoslav, who had ruled in their time, and who for their courage and valour are renowned in many lands to this day: for they had not ruled in some poor and unknown land, but in the Russian land which was renowned and spoken of in every corner of the world."

The authors must have unquestionably had firm ground to stand on in order to express these ideas with such conviction. Rus's right to general recognition was won in highly involved social and political circumstances. Rus was indeed known in every corner of the world. She was not only known but also recognized. When a simple Russian Father-Superior arrived in Jerusalem, its king, Baldwin, gave him exceptional attention, naturally not because of his rank, but because he was representative of the Russian state. At Easter, the king took him to the Church of the Lord's Sepulchre when he walked through a crowd with his retinue and "ordered him to be placed high above the very gates of the sepulchre." The Father-Superior was allowed to enter a place which was barred to every one.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "They keep it sacred (David's chamber—*Author*) with great care and do not allow anyone to enter it; but I, a simple man, was helped

The Arabs also honoured the Russian Father-Superior: "The Senior Saracen himself, bearing arms, led us from there to Bethlehem and walked with us through all those places also."

There is a great number of other examples (marriage alliances, political agreements, military co-operation, trade and cultural ties) to prove that Rus was recognized in the West and East.

Byzantium, the most enlightened of states in those days, was very well informed about Rus, much more so than any other country. Her old ties with Rus determined the latter's acceptance of Christianity from Byzantium. But it was a step for which Rus may have paid a high price. As a matter of fact, the Russian land became a metropolis of the Constantinople Patriarch, and in Byzantium the ecclesiastical and temporal authorities were closely allied. The Emperor was the head of the Empire as well as of the Church. It is understandable, then, that the Metropolitan sent to Kiev by Byzantium became the head of the Russian Church while remaining, first and foremost, a representative of the Constantinople Patriarch and, thereby, of the Byzantine Emperor. This status of the Kiev Metropolitan could not, of course, fail to arouse conflicts on matters of principle among the Russian princes and in Russian society.

Yaroslav's attempt to put an end to this ambiguous situation can, therefore, be readily understood. He tried to enhance the prestige of his capital city and to fashion it after Constantinople. To this end he laid the foundations for a new Kremlin, built the "Golden Gates," erected the St. Sophia Cathedral and a number of churches and monasteries.

Long before this (since 989) the 13-cupola wooden Sophia stood in Novgorod, and soon after another appeared in Polotsk, symbolizing the cultural and political unity of Rus's three greatest centres. It should be borne in mind

by God to enter that holy chamber and succeeded in taking with me one of my men, Sdeslav Ivankovich, but no one else was allowed in."



that the single cult of Peroun had once been widespread in Novgorod and Kiev and very likely in Polotsk as well. The St. Sophia bound Rus to Byzantium ideologically, but as the facts show, this by no means signified that Rus was prepared to submit to Byzantium and lose her own identity.

Yaroslav very definitely conducted his own national policy, and his conflict with Byzantium came to a head in 1043 when Russian troops, under the leadership of Vladimir, his son, marched against her, a campaign which a Byzantine statesman called a war of the "barbarians" against Greek hegemony. The campaign proved a failure as far as Rus was concerned, but Yaroslav did not lay down his arms, and in 1051 he decided upon a very bold step—the appointment of a Russian as Metropolitan. The Greeks interpreted this step correctly, but dared not sever relations and agreed to compromise: Kiev accepted a Greek Metropolitan and Yaroslav's son Vsevolod married a princess of the house of the Monomakhs.

The Kiev Pechera Monastery came into being soon after the appointment of Hilarion, the first Russian Metropolitan. The monk Antony, its founder, at first lived in the cave where Hilarion had worked before him.

Prominent men began to gather around Antony. They were people who at various times had played an important role in Rus's ecclesiastical and political life. Among them were the "Great Nikon," a continuer of the earliest chronicle; the very notable social and political figure, Feodosy, and Varlaam, son of the distinguished Kiev boyar Yefrem, who later became bishop of Pereyaslavl. Four years later the Kiev Pechera Monastery was already well known. Regular intercourse was established between the monastery and the prince's court. Izyaslav, Yaroslav's eldest son, was wont to come to the monastery with his men-at-arms to ask Antony for his prayers and blessing before taking any steps of political importance.

From the moment of its foundation the monastery sup-

ported Yaroslav's efforts to secure the independence of the Church. It became the centre of Russian national thought, a seminary and school for Russian hierarchs. From it "many bishops (about 50) were appointed throughout the Russian land" as Bishop Simon emphasized in his letter to black friar Polycarp about 1225.

The growing political significance of the monastery and its orientation<sup>1</sup> could not, of course, fail to alarm the Greek Metropolitan, whose new flock was not the "barbaric" herd the Constantinople authorities were at first inclined to consider it. It was a vigorous and active people, who by no means intended to be blindly led by the Greeks, and who, furthermore, had all the material and spiritual possibilities to act as they wished.

The "Great Nikon" was forced to leave the cloister and spent three years in Tmutarakan following disputes between the monastery and the Metropolitan. Antony was also coerced into leaving the monastery.

The monastery, and no doubt Antony himself, participated to some extent in the uprising of the people of Kiev against Izyaslav in 1068, and when the latter, with the help of Polish feudal lords, regained the Kiev throne, Antony, fearing the prince's wrath, was compelled to leave the city by night. He was taken away by Svyatoslav of Chernigov. Feodosy likewise did not remain passive, although his attitude towards Izyaslav was different. He recognized the latter, but he was uneasy about Izyaslav's attraction to Catholicism and Poland. Feodosy's *Message* to Izyaslav has been preserved. It accuses and cautions him in the following words: "Thou, son, beware of men of alien faith, and all their words, lest our land be filled with that evil belief." ... "It is not fitting, son, to extol an alien faith, for he who praiseth an alien faith defameth his own." ... "Thou, son, be on thy guard against them, and

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<sup>1</sup> There are, unfortunately, very few precise facts for the study of its activities. My essay is largely based on hints given in the sources, which were previously used by M. D. Priselskoy.



praise thine own faith incessantly; do not become intimate with them, but avoid them, and by good deeds follow the precepts of thine own faith." His words, "guard thy daughters, do not give in marriage, nor take in marriage from among them,"<sup>1</sup> were directed against Izyaslav, who was married to a Catholic, maintained constant ties with Poland and was surrounded by Poles (even his son Mstislav had Polish bodyguards).

The following characteristic reservation in his *Message* reveals how noble were the national sentiments of this Pechera monk: "Have mercy on people not only of thine own faith, but of alien faiths as well: when thou seest the unclad, or the hungry, or the cold, or the distressed, whoever they may be, whether Jew or Saracen, or Bulgarian, or heretic, or Catholic, or any other heathen—be merciful to each, and relieve him of his distress to the best of thy abilities." This was no narrow nationalism.

The *Message* was of little avail. When Izyaslav was in exile for the second time, he sought help not only from his kinsman, the King of Poland, Boleslav, but also appealed to the German Emperor, Heinrich IV, and to Pope Gregory VII himself, promising to recognize the latter's power upon his safe return to Kiev.

Whether or not Feodosy knew of Izyaslav's foreign adventures, he was in any case a very staunch defender of his rights to the Kiev throne when it was occupied by his brother Svyatoslav. Relations between Feodosy and the court were almost severed. Svyatoslav was on the point of imprisoning Feodosy. Feodosy was saved by the intervention of the notables and the brethren. Feodosy made his peace with Svyatoslav and allowed him to be mentioned in the church services, but only after Izyaslav. Nikon refused to compromise and preferred to stay in Tmutarakan.

Svyatoslav expressed a readiness to come to an agree-

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<sup>1</sup> Maria Dobrognéva, a daughter of Vladimir Svyatoslavich, was married to the King of Poland, Casimir I. Their son was married to a Russian princess. Izyaslav Yaroslavich married Casimir's sister.

ment with the monastery and even presented it with one of his fields which was adjacent to it. He personally took part in laying the corner-stone for a church in the monastery. And when, shortly after this, Feodosy fell ill, Svyatoslav and his son Gleb came to his death-bed and heard his will. Feodosy asked the prince to take the monastery under his protection. This was important, since the Greek Metropolitans continued to look askance at the activities of the Pechera Monastery. He knew, of course, that Svyatoslav was his ally in this matter, for the prince had opposed Byzantine claims more than once. In his time, the Metropolitan preferred to live in Pereyaslavl with the Grecophile Vsevolod, who was hostile to Svyatoslav.

Feodosy died in 1074, followed two years later by Svyatoslav. Vsevolod installed himself on the Kiev throne. Six months later Izyaslav, whose interests Feodosy had so zealously defended, returned from exile. The change of princes on the Kiev throne was followed by the inevitable change of superiors. Stefan was expelled by the brethren and Nikon was installed in his place. However, Izyaslav's unexpected death on the battle-field (Oct. 3, 1078) once more upset all the plans of Kiev political circles. Power passed into the hands of Vsevolod who had for a long time been closely connected with the Byzantine imperial court and who was held in great favour by the Emperor Michael VII Ducas. Two of his letters to Vsevolod, which have been preserved, make this perfectly clear.

For obvious reasons friendly relations were established between Vsevolod and the Metropolitan, and once more there were hard times for the Pechera Monastery. To counterbalance the Pechera Monastery Vsevolod built a monastery of his own, the Mikhail Vydubitsky, and showed great concern for its welfare. The Metropolitan, who resolutely refused to take any interest whatever in the Pechera Monastery, took a most active part in the consecration of a church at this new cloister. Nikon, the Father-Superior, had to face many difficulties. Unfortunately, the annals



he kept at that time have not been preserved. They were undoubtedly pervaded with the spirit of the Pechera Monastery, that national patriotic feeling so unacceptable to the Greek Metropolitan and his supporters.

Other works were written in the cloister in Feodosy's time. The monk Iakov wrote his *In Memory and Praise of St. Vladimir*; he is also credited with having written *The Legend of Boris and Gleb*. Both are infused with a profound patriotic feeling; they discussed and gave solutions to very acute problems.

The Greeks were by no means happy over the appearance of Russian "saints" and did all they could to prevent the Russians from canonizing their own people.

The sainthood of Boris and Gleb was very reluctantly recognized by the Metropolitan.<sup>1</sup> The Greeks firmly resisted the canonization of Olga, Vladimir and Feodosy. A widespread struggle was waged around the major issue of whether the Russian land was to be culturally independent or to continue under the tutelage of the Greeks.

The Greeks could not fail to notice the use to which their Russian flock put their first gain. Boris and Gleb were rapidly and readily recognized throughout Rus. Russians, both princes and commoners, began to erect churches in their honour and took a great interest in their magnificence.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the annals, the Greek Metropolitan strongly doubted the sanctity of the brother-princes and only after their relics had been transferred to the new church in Vyshgorod, built by Prince Izyaslav, and when the church during the ceremony was "filled with fragrance" the Metropolitan was horrified, "for he had not been firm in his faith in them," says a patriotic Russian chronicler reporting the incident. The Greek Metropolitan "prostrated himself and prayed for forgiveness." The Russian land unhesitatingly welcomed the glorification of its saints. Great was its joy and zeal. Their memory was celebrated most solemnly and the date, July 24, was included among the great annual holidays: "... The feast of Boris and Gleb is a newly instituted feast on Russian soil." (*Lavrenty Annals* for 1093.) The next Russian to become a saint was Feodosy of Pechera, who was included in the synodic list on the instructions of the Kiev Prince, Svyatopolk Izyaslavich.

Boris and Gleb became manifest rivals of St. Sophia. Sadko, a rich Novgorod merchant, erected, at his own expense, an imposing church in Novgorod in honour of the two saints. With the consent of the Novgorod *veche* and the bishop, he selected a site in the Kremlin where at one time the first wooden Sophia stood, just opposite the new Sophia, to which it seemed almost a challenge. At various times seven more churches were built in Novgorod in honour of these canonized princes.

It was more difficult to organize such a demonstration in Kiev, where the Greek Metropolitan had his seat. But a church bearing the names of Boris and Gleb appeared at Vyshgorod, the favourite country residence of the Kiev princes, where the relics of the first Russian saints were transferred with exceptional solemnity. A special holiday, the Transference of the Relics of Boris and Gleb, was instituted to commemorate this event, and deep political significance was attached to it. The Church of Boris and Gleb in Vyshgorod held the most honoured place among Kiev's sanctuaries. It was no accident that when Vladimir Davidovich of Galich arrived in Kiev with Yury Dolgoruky, he deemed it necessary to pay a visit to Vyshgorod in the first place: "He went to Vyshgorod to kneel before the holy martyrs, and having knelt to them, he went to the Church of St. Sophia." In this case Sophia came second.

Churches were also erected to these saints on the Alta River, on the site where Boris had been killed, in Pereyaslavl Russky, in Rostov, Chernigov, Ryazan, Pskov, Grodno, Polotsk, and elsewhere. Their feast was celebrated six times a year: May 2, May 20, July 24, August 11, August 12, September 5—a highly unusual practice. The feast of Boris and Gleb was considered a "great" feast throughout Rus.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Е. Е. Голубинский, История канонизации святых в русской церкви, М. 1903, стр. 49. (Y. Y. Golubinsky, *A History of Canonization in the Russian Church*, Moscow, 1903, p. 49.)



It is noteworthy that the cult of these saints was established in Czechia several years after their glorification in Rus. A special chapel was built in the Sozavsky Monastery in Czechia. This was a new form of expressing the cultural and political bonds linking the two Slav peoples. These events were soon echoed in Armenia, where the lives of Boris and Gleb were inscribed in the *Prologue*. Eventually, they were recognized by Constantinople.

The Pechera Monastery responded to the "feast of the Russian land" by compiling the lives of the first Russian saints. This was entrusted to Nestor, the most outstanding literary figure in the monastery at that time.

The stubborn refusal of the Greeks to encourage the Russians in this direction was quite natural. And the fact that the Russians did not lay down their arms in this struggle is equally natural.

The idea that Prince Vladimir and his mother Olga were in no way inferior to Emperor Constantine and his mother Helen and were fully worthy of canonization had been put forward very clearly many years before by the Pechera monk Iakov in his *In Memory and Praise of St. Vladimir*. These ideas and sentiments were taken up by Hilarion in his *Discourse of Law and Bliss*. The Greeks viewed this as a challenge and accepted it.

The general atmosphere which developed around this issue in Rus suggested to the Greeks the tactics which they should pursue. They realized that restrictions alone would not suffice among people who knew how to think and support their ideas with argumentation of compelling force. They had to fight and prepare a counter-offensive. An attack upon Vladimir appeared, claiming that he was a mere libertine who scorned no means to satisfy his insatiable lust. His harems failed to satisfy him, so he dishonoured Rogneda and abandoned her. He had done the same with the daughter of the Korsun prince: he married off the dishonoured girl to one of his men-at-arms. The same Vladimir had mendaciously demanded the sister of

the Byzantine Emperor in marriage, and only a miracle had saved her from disgrace. An eye disease which affected him forced him to repent and to keep his promise. Was this a fit candidate for sainthood, whose baptism had been forced upon him by difficult circumstances and was not the result of his own free will? How could he be called a Russian Constantine?

The Greeks tried to parry another attack from the Pechera Monastery in a similar manner. Nestor issued his *Life of Feodosy* which proved conclusively the need for his canonization. In reply there appeared a *Life of Antony*, which minimized Feodosy's services, and extolled Antony, a puppet of the Greeks. Antony's biography emphasizes the exceptional services rendered to Russian Christian teaching by the Greek Athos, which Antony represented in Rus. It was he who was the real founder of the Pechera Monastery; it was he, not Feodosy, who introduced the Greek monastic statutes into the monastery, it was he, again, who had laid the foundations of the stone church and the cells. In short, the Pechera Monastery was the work of the Greeks.

Both Greek outbursts against the Pechera Monastery found no response among the Russians and were soon forgotten. However, the Pechera monks drew a different conclusion from the indisputable facts of Antony's biography. Since Athos took part in spreading culture in Rus, and since it was not under the authority of the patriarch but was directly subject to the Emperor, it followed that the Pechera Monastery should also be subordinate to the Russian prince and in no way dependent upon the Greek Metropolitan.

In spite of his ties with Byzantium, Prince Vsevolod was a Russian and could not remain indifferent to the aspirations of his compatriots. Ivan, the Superior of the Kiev Pechera Monastery, succeeded in winning a measure of favour for his institution, although only at the close of Vsevolod's reign. The prince permitted him to transfer the



relics of Feodosy into a stone church, but neither he nor the members of his family were present at the ceremony.

In his chronicles the Pechera Superior Ivan decided to say a few words in justification of Vsevolod, then dead. He said that the latter was an ailing and decrepit man who had handed over the administration of his affairs to the junior members of his retinue.

Mutual understanding was apparently not achieved.

When Svyatopolk Izyaslavich, who was hostile to the Vsevolod family, became prince, he arrested Ivan and exiled him to his own ancestral city of Turov.

In spite of the many objectionable aspects of his character and behaviour, this prince had one positive quality which was appreciated in the Pechera Monastery and in particular by Nestor. He proved to be a protagonist of that national Russian tradition which like an unquenchable flame was kept alive in that most ancient of Russian monastic institutions. This friendliness for the Pechera Monastery was encouraged by the dissension between Svyatopolk and Metropolitan Nikolai (1096-1101) and his successor Nikifor.

Svyatopolk finally ventured to take a step for which Russian patriots had been long awaiting. He consented to a partial canonization of Feodosy. The father-superior of the monastery was promoted to archimandrite.

Meanwhile, Nestor, in his cell, was preparing for the new work with which he was soon officially entrusted.

We are now in a position to answer the questions posed by Schlözer: "How did Nestor come to think of writing a chronicle of his land in his own tongue? How did this Rus decide to become a historian of his people?"

Schlözer had a distorted conception of the history and state of Russian civilization and could not allow any possibility of treaties which he considered forgeries having been concluded with the Greeks. He was therefore justified in posing such questions.

Now they can be easily answered.

It was the cultural needs of Russian society which prompted Nestor to write a history of his native land. His special training and the work of his predecessors enabled him to become a historian of his people. The Russian literary language was developed to such a state that it could answer the needs of a scholarly work as well as a poetic composition of any genre.

Some names have become symbolic. Among them is that of Nestor. Even those who doubt the existence of a real chronicler called Nestor have to admit that the shade of the great patriarch is very much alive and is as popular as that of Homer.

Schlözer who had no special motives to extol the author of the *Chronicle*, singled it out from among other similar compositions.

"This Rus," he wrote, "compared with the Icelanders and the Poles, is as superior as reason at times obscured is superior to incessant stupidity." The greatness of this composition was a riddle only to Schlözer. To us it appears logical.

Nestor approached his task in a very broad way. He rewrote and completed the work of his predecessors, considerably extending the chronological framework. He devoted much attention to Svyatopolk, obscuring the dark sides of his activities and underlining his qualities. In this he was undoubtedly guided by a feeling of gratitude for Svyatopolk's kindly attitude to the Pechera Monastery and for his support of its programme.

Nestor paid dearly for his support of Svyatopolk as soon as Vladimir Monomakh, the former's adversary, came to power after his death.

Vladimir Monomakh differed from his predecessor in many respects. He was already 60 years old when he ascended the Kiev throne. He was brilliantly educated for his time and had great experience in military and international affairs. He was a student of human nature and having been warned of the demands of the masses by



threatening events, he was able to draw up a plan of action that was based on the careful calculations of a realistic statesman. His main aim was to arrest, at the cost of inevitable compromise, the process of Rus's feudal fragmentation. The princes of the large demesnes, who had drawn apart, were permitted to remain in their possessions, provided they recognized the Kiev prince who personified the unity of the Russian land.

Fully realizing the significance of the various political trends whose struggle had become more acute in the last years of Svyatopolk's reign, and which had so violently manifested itself directly after his death, Monomakh frowned on the activities of the Pechera Monastery and of Nestor in particular.

The keeping of the annals was turned over to the monastery of the Vsevolod family and was entrusted to Sylvester, Superior of the Mikhail Vydubitsky Monastery. He was not merely to continue the work of his predecessors but to rewrite it according to Vladimir's personal instructions. This was an expression of mistrust of Nestor and his monastery, as well as of the principle underlying his life's work. The impact of this step extended far beyond the walls of the Pechera Monastery and of Kiev itself. It had national implications. For a long time after this Nestor's name became a thing of odium. It was even removed from the book which, strictly speaking, was his work. Permission was given that his name be implied under the term "the monk of Feodosy's Pechera Monastery." Many years were to elapse before his name was resurrected and spoken of throughout the world.

Such were the social and political conditions under which the first systematic work on the history of Rus appeared. It appeared in spite of everything, and the obstacles its authors had to surmount clearly testify to their awareness of its importance. They fought for every idea because they were not indifferent to them.

The Kiev Pechera Monastery did not wish to accept the

situation and tried to restore its moral and political prestige in the eyes of the Russian world. At the price of considerable sacrifice it succeeded in having the keeping of the chronicles once again entrusted to it. However, it was simultaneously also carried on at the Vydubitsky Monastery.

If we bear in mind that parallel to this main line of Russian chronicling there were supplementary ones, that chronicles were compiled in Novgorod, Galich, Pereyaslavl, and that the clergy in cloisters and bishoprics, as well as laymen at the prince's court, took part in this work, it becomes obvious that the people of Rus were tremendously interested in the history of their own country.

The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is a work of human genius, assured of unflagging interest throughout the centuries. It was read with excitement and interest when it first appeared, nor can it be read with indifference today.

In addition to numerous Russian editions, the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* was translated and published abroad. In 1860, it was published by Miklošič, in Vienna. At the same time a Polish translation was issued by Krotkowski in Kiev. A German translation was made by Joseph Miller in Berlin in 1812, a French translation by Louis Paris in Paris in 1834; a Swedish translation in Helsingfors in 1849; a Czech translation by Jaromir Erben in Prague in 1864, a Danish translation by Smith in Copenhagen in 1869. In 1868, Louis Loger translated a part of the chronicle into French as an appendix to his doctor's thesis, *Nestor*. He also made a complete translation of the annals in 1884, and that same year they were published in Lvov in a Latin translation by K. Luchakowski. In 1916, it was almost completely translated into the Hungarian. An English translation is also available.

How can one explain such a profound and unflagging interest in a work written in Kiev 900 years ago? How can one explain its extraordinary influence upon subsequent historiography on Russia, both domestic and foreign?



The reading public of the 11th and 12th centuries regarded it as a living word about their motherland, its past and present, about the great work of the preceding generations which culminated in the formation of a mighty state. Today it is a source of information regarding Rus's past, unique in its way. It gives us a systematic account of Russian ancient history, which is logical even if incomplete and somewhat biased.

The Russian land was not isolated; it grew, matured and won a place for itself in world history, being in constant touch with other peoples. Its first historians could not fail to be interested in these ties because they were a part of Russian life. Hence the universal interest in Nestor (as the *Chronicle* is commonly called). Since the history of Ancient Rus is a major part of world history, a book written by a Kieville about his own state could not and cannot fail to be of interest to the scholar abroad.

I do not intend to elaborate on the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* in detail. I feel it necessary, however, to outline the main ideas underlying it and comment on the author's technique.

What astonishes us above all is his profound view of Rus's place in world history. Nestor's unpretentious notes developed into generalizations on a world scale. He has recourse to the Bible, and presents a political and ethnical picture of the world on a grand scale. He seeks a place for the Slavs among the peoples in order to approach the question of the Eastern Slavs logically.

After paying tribute to the idea of Slav unity, and calling on the Slavs to unite through language and education at a time when the Slavs were going through a very difficult period (the Moravian state had been crushed by the Hungarians early in the 10th century, and the Bulgarian Kingdom by Byzantium early in the 11th; the Polab and Baltic Slavs yielded to German pressure and, together with the Czechs and Poles, to Catholic influence), he hastens to pass on to the main subject of his study—the fate of

the Russian people. He is well versed in the geography of his country. He knows that the "Oka forests" are the source of the three major rivers which played a decisive role in Russia's history—the Dnieper, the Western Dvina and the Volga. He knows too that there is a route along the Dnieper and the adjacent system of water-ways which leads from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, from the Scandinavian countries to Constantinople and Rome; that the Dvina leads to the west, to the Baltic Sea, and the Volga far to the east, to the countries around and beyond the Caspian. He thus gives the setting for his account of the life of his compatriots, but his attention is centred on the period when the new dynasty of Kiev princes ascended the throne.

Eighteenth and nineteenth century scholars failed to notice that Nestor passed over without comment a sizable period of Rus's history prior to the formation of Ancient Rus. This indicates the limited demands of aristocratic and bourgeois scholars and their lack of theory necessitating a broad approach to the subject.

Nestor refers to the first mention made of his people in the *Greek Chronicle* under Emperor Mikhail, saying: "We . . . shall tell about what happened (in Rus—*Author*) in these years, as we began to tell earlier about the first year, about Mikhail." In his entry for 858 he writes that "King Mikhail went with his men against Bulgaria by land and sea," and in the next item he presents a fact taken from Russian history which is obviously not an initial one, about the Baltic peoples, including the Slavs, allegedly paying tribute to the Varangians, and about the Khazars levying tribute on some of the South Russian tribes. He says nothing of those parts of Rus which paid tribute to no one, thus indicating that these facts in his story are of minor importance. His aim is merely to show how the legendary Rurik appeared in Novgorod and why the new dynasty clashed with the Khazars.

The chronicler believes that the strong rule of the Kiev



prince saved the Russian and many non-Russian peoples from "internecine war." By its "great effort" it rallied them in a single state. Today, he says, when "internecine war" is consuming Rus with renewed force, it can once again preserve the political unity of the country. This idea permeates the whole of literature both at that time and in the subsequent period, finding its summit expression in the *Lay of Igor's Host*.

Pride in their past, apprehension of the future and an appeal for the defence of the country's integrity—this ideological basis of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* is evidence of the political maturity of its author and of those for whom it was written.

The scholar must also note another aspect of the matter, which is equally important, namely, the chronicler's ability to compile a history of his state and people, and his training which enabled him to undertake a work of such magnitude independently.

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There were very many educated and gifted people in Rus at that time. They were, naturally, not all Hilarions or men of equal stature with the unknown author of the *Lay of Igor's Host*, but never were there many of such people anywhere.

Nestor is no poet. Neither is he a first-class orator. He is merely an expert in his line, a learned man who is capable of putting his thoughts down on paper in an orderly and literary form. He did not run prophetic fingers over the living chords of his psaltery.<sup>1</sup> His sole instruments were his quill and the great Russian language which by that time was sufficiently mature to allow the author to give a simple, truthful and clear picture of "his native country's past."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to Boyan's skill in the *Lay of Igor's Host*.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> A quotation from a monologue by the chronicler Pimen in Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*.—Tr.

Nestor is a scholar who was capable of comprehending the interconnection of world events.

He prepared long and hard for a work of such scope. He had the writings of his predecessors at his disposal, but he made a great stride forward. He studied the Greek chronicles and particularly the chronicle of Amartola and Simeon Lagophet who continued his work. He was acquainted with the *Chronographer*, Nikifor's *Brief Chronicle*, the *Life of Vasily the New*, the *Revelations of Methody Patarsky*, the Slav legend *Concerning the Appearance of the Slav Alphabet*, sources on St. Andrew the Apostle, who enlightened the Scythians, and the treaties with the Greeks. He knows popular legends, historical songs and other folk-lore. He himself was constantly in touch with his contemporaries who made history and who unquestionably helped him with advice and documents. It goes without saying that no one except Prince Svyatopolk Izyaslavich could give Nestor access to his library, where he found not only the treaties with the Greeks but also other historical documents.

Finally, the Pechera Monastery was itself a fountain-head of social and political ideas. The monks were the first to learn not only of the major acts of the authorities, but also of their intentions. The selfsame Svyatopolk Izyaslavich was wont, "when he went to war or elsewhere, to pray at the sepulchre of Feodosy and ask for the blessing of the Father-Superior, and only then would he proceed on his way." On August 12, 1107, for instance, the Russian troops vanquished the Polovtsy, and some two or three days later Prince Svyatopolk arrived at the Pechera Monastery with the happy tidings directly from the field of battle. Yuri Dolgoruky arranged to meet his ally Vladimir at the Pechera Monastery where they "made a great friendship." Such facts are numerous.

Nestor is capable of adopting a critical approach to the facts when such are at his disposal. He discovers their interconnection and dates them.



The fact that subsequent chroniclers invariably inserted Nestor's work into their own with only minor alterations and additions shows to what extent his skill was appreciated by those who carried on his work. We have an evaluation of his work expressed by a modest lover of history who lived in Rostov region: "I pray, brethren, those who shall read and hear these books: if any one find much in this that is incomplete or insufficient, do not reproach me, for I am not from Kiev, or from Novgorod, nor yet from Vladimir, but a villager of Rostov region. I have written only as much as I have found. How can I complete that which is beyond my powers and which I do not see before me? My memory is not exceptional and I am not versed in the doctor's art. . . . What God entrusts me with, that I shall inscribe in the annals." (*Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, XV, 142.)

"If thou wishest to know all," wrote Bishop Simon to monk Polycarp in the twenties of the 13th century, "read the old Rostov chronicler."

Every reader of the chronicle, whoever he may have been, well knew that the book was reliable, of high quality and important.

Every educated Russian of the 11th and 12th centuries did not only have to be capable of using the Russian literary language, be well versed in the Christian dogma, and have an idea of logic (all this was called "the doctor's art"). Above all he had to know his country's history. We have ample proof of this: most of the higher clergy, princes, boyars, writers and poets knew Rus history well. Hilarion was well versed in this subject. And one is simply astounded by the scope of historical knowledge and the profundity of interpretation of historical events exhibited by the author of the *Lay of Igor's Host*.

What was the source of this knowledge in the 13th century and after?

It is clear that it was the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, "whence the Russian land began."

Wherever the Russians lived—whether it be Galich near the Carpathians, Great Novgorod, Vladimir on the Volyn or Klyazma, or remote Tmutarakan—that book told them of their national and cultural unity, taught them to respect and love their past, and to take pride in their common ancestors, who gave their lives in defence of their country's independence.

The beacon in honour of the Russian land, lit in 11th-century Kiev, illumined its path. Nor is it extinguished today.

Turning to the past, Great Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian opens the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* to find himself. This book is also needed by every Slav, as well as Hungarian and Greek, and by many Asian peoples. It is read with interest in Europe. Great Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian discover the beginnings of their peoples in pre-Kiev and Kiev Rus. All three branches of Rus possess those noble qualities—a rational mind, selflessness and a broad sweep of temperament. Only such a people could have assimilated the vast expanses on two continents and found common ground for friendship in constant contact with non-Russian peoples.

Kiev Rus's brilliant and profound civilization is the result of age-long development of a great and creative people.



## VIII. AN OUTLINE OF ANCIENT RUS'S POLITICAL HISTORY





## 1. THE PEOPLES AND TRIBES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND RUS

Speaking of the peoples partially integrated in the state of Ancient Rus and partially connected with it in various ways, we should bear in mind that every people is the product of an intricate and protracted process. It is the task of the scholar to trace, as far as possible, the shaping of the peoples known to us. I admit, however, that it is a task which cannot be fulfilled in full, due to the difficulties involved.

Furthermore, our written sources are very obscure about these peoples. At times one and the same people is designated by different names, and at other times different peoples are confused. Finally, when they describe peoples which have more or less crystallized they do not give us any facts about the process of crystallization. That is why this brief political history of the state of Ancient Rus deals with these peoples on a smaller scale than the author thinks necessary.

By the end of the 10th century the Ancient Rus state occupied a vast territory inhabited by sundry peoples in various phases of development. This giant state, which was only comparatively uniform in its territorial growth, continued to integrate sundry ethnic units (each with a history of its own prior to that integration) until it reached its "natural" frontiers late in the 10th century, which it lacked the strength to go beyond.

In the north-east the state of Ancient Rus bordered on the Bulgarian state on the Volga. Although the sources often confuse the Danube and the Volga Bulgarians, there is no ground to reject facts which indicate trade between the Kiev princes and their *druzhinas* with both the Danube and the Volga Bulgarians. At all events, the Volga Bulgarians were not a part of Ancient Rus but concluded trade agreements with Kiev.

In the north and north-west Ancient Rus integrated several tribes of the Finnish language and the Yatvyag tribe, reaching the Baltic shores and making her way to the White Sea. At some points in the south her frontiers reached the Black Sea. At all events, the Black Sea was well known in Kiev. In the west, Kiev's possessions were contiguous with Poland.

The southern part of the state of Ancient Rus is in general of great interest to the scholar due to its complexity. It presents substantial difficulties too. From time immemorial it was populated by nomadic and settled peoples of which the earliest—the Cimmerii—were conquered and partially ousted by the Scythians in approximately the 8th century B.C. The latter are particularly well described by the Greek ethnographer and historian Herodotus who came to this country in the 5th century B.C. These reports by Herodotus are greatly supplemented by archaeological materials.

The Scythians is a collective name for many peoples and tribes who lived in Eastern Europe, in particular in the south and partially in the middle regions of our country. These peoples and tribes were called Scythians by the Greeks. They themselves had various names for the tribes and peoples, singling out the Scoloti, the Saki, etc. But even the Greeks at times differentiated between the various peoples and tribes who made up the Scythians. The European Scythia which Herodotus describes in his famous paper, embraced approximately the following lands: Bessarabia, Odessa, Zaporozhye and Dniepro-



petrovsk regions, the Crimea, Podolia, Poltava territory and a part of the Chernigov territory, Kursk and Voronezh regions. Herodotus was also informed, although not very accurately, about the more northern areas of the country. He calls the Scythians nearest the Greek city of Olbia Kallepedes. They lived to the west of the Dnieper, and above them were the Alazons. These were settled and agricultural peoples. Herodotus notes that the Kallepedes were strongly influenced by Greek culture. They were "Hellenized Scythians." The Scythian ploughmen lived to the north of the Alazons, up to the very sources of the Southern Bug. The Borysthenites lived on the left bank of the Dnieper (known as the Borysthenes). The steppes to the east were occupied by the nomad Scythians.

The "royal Scythians" lived in Chernigov, Kursk, Kharkov, Voronezh, Poltava and Dniepropetrovsk regions. Herodotus declares them to be the bravest and most numerous people who dominated the other Scythians. The Sarmatians, or the Sauromatians lived beyond the Don, to the east.

A view widespread among the Greeks was that the Scythians had come from Asia, although there is evidence that a part of the Scythians were autochthonous. Late in the 6th century B.C. the Scythians clashed with the Persians. The Persian King Darius was unable to conquer them, although it appears that he had to deal with only a part of the Scythians, the nomadic section. The Scythian hordes, which managed to defend themselves from the dreaded conqueror, were led by Idanfirs.

It is self-evident that all these tribes and peoples known under the common name of Scythians were on varying cultural levels. Nor were they uniform in the ethnical sense either. This is also proved by archaeology.

Herodotus studied at first hand a part of the territory of the future state of Ancient Rus. Being accustomed to his own country's hilly and riverless landscape, the learned Greek was surprised by the plains around the Dnieper and

astounded at the mighty rivers. Here is how he describes the Dnieper:

"The Borysthenes River (Dnieper) is the most profitable, it furnishes the herds with the finest highly nutritive pastures, excellent meadows, and fish in great quantities. The water is very tasty and is the cleanest among the turbid Scythian rivers. Excellent arable land lies along its shores. Very tall grass grows where the soil is not sown. There are natural salt deposits at its estuary, and it abounds in large boneless fish (apparently the sturgeon—*Author*) which is salted. The land of the Scythians," he says further, "produces corn, lentils, onions, garlic, flax and hemp. Among the animals it has the horse, bull, boar, deer, hares, goats, etc."

Other Greek and Roman authors, such as Strabo, Hippocrates, Clearchus of Solia and Pliny, have described the Scythian tribes and peoples. Their descriptions vary because they studied different peoples: Strabo speaks of their frugality, Clearchus of their luxury, Hippocrates of their nomadic way of life and their polygamy, Herodotus of their monogamy and settled way of life.

Intercourse was established between the Greeks and the Scythians. The Greeks received corn, cattle, honey, wax, salt fish, metals, amber and slaves from the Scythians, in return for luxury articles (which the spade now reveals), wine, oil, pottery and fabrics.

But the intercourse was not always peaceful. There are reports of armed clashes between them. Philip of Macedonia and Lysinachus, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, fought the Scythians and at times succeeded in exacting tribute from them.

We can gain an impression of their anthropological type, costume, arms, harness, etc., from the sumptuous vases and other articles found in royal tombs which bear Scythian images. In the 2nd century B.C. the Scythians still held sway in the area close to the Black and the Azov



seas, but their might had been crushed by the Kingdom of the Bosphorus and the attacks of the Sarmatians.

The Greeks, then, used the term "Scythians" to designate a number of tribes and peoples, rather than any single people, who lived in the southern and middle regions of our country. The ancestors of the Eastern Slavs were possibly a part of an alliance of several tribes of Scythian times.

It is noteworthy that Byzantine authors use the term "Scythian" and "Tauro-Scythian" to designate the Russian people even much later. Leo the Deacon mentions Rus only once, and usually uses the term "Tauro-Scythians." Zonaras is very explicit and calls it "a certain Scythian gens, the Rus." Anna Comnena calls the Rus settlers on the Danube "a certain Scythian tribe."<sup>1</sup>

The Goths become prominent in our country in the period between the 2nd and 4th centuries A.D. Their history was unquestionably very much embellished by Jordanes, the royal historian of the Goths, who wrote in the 6th century. His task was to glorify his king, Hermanarich, and this he attempted to do by an obvious exaggeration of the latter's military exploits and the dimensions of his state.

The ancient people known as the Goths apparently lived along the lower reaches of the Vistula and to the north-east along the Baltic coast. A part of them succeeded in penetrating into the basins of the Dnieper and the Dniester, where they mixed with the Gets,<sup>2</sup> kin of the Cimmerii, and with certain Sarmatian and other local tribes. Ancient authors sometimes called this conglomeration of peoples Scythians and sometimes Goths.

Jordanes is also aware of the existence of the Slavs. He says that they are "mighty in their numbers" and calls them by three names (the Wends, Antes and Sclaveni). He knows nothing of their origin, but indicates that they

<sup>1</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. I, p. 38 et al.

<sup>2</sup> Theophilact Simocatta of Byzantium (7th century) believed the Gets to have been Slavs. (*Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 1, 1941, p. 265.)

lived on the territory "from the town of Navetunsky (the Danube delta) and the Murshanskoye Lake (near the Drava River) up to the Dnieper, and to the Vistula in the north." "The most powerful of the Antes," he says, "live near the curve of the sea-shore at the Pontus, between the Dniester and the Dnieper."

Procopius reports on "the countless Ante peoples." Each of these authors notes the close relationship between the Antes and the Slavs: they speak the same language, look alike and have similar customs.

The Antes in the 6th century lived in the territory between the north-eastern slopes of the Carpathians and the Don and far away to the north. (Neither Procopius nor Jordanes give the northern border, apparently because it was unknown.) Thus, they occupied the main part of the territory of the future state of Ancient Rus. This fact prompted Rybakov to pay special attention to the history of the Antes, since it is also the history of the Eastern Slavs.

In his special paper, entitled *The Antes, the Slavs and Byzantium in 4th-7th centuries*,<sup>1</sup> Rybakov made use of written sources and archaeological data to arrive at the conclusion that there was evident continuity between the history of the Antes and that of Ancient Rus. It is one and the same ethnic mass, speaking the same tongue, believing in Peroun, sailing the monoxyles (log boats), and burning its slave women on the graves of the deceased prince. He considers the middle reaches of the Dnieper and the Ros River basin to be the centre of the Ante territory where most of their 6th-8th century articles were discovered. It is there too that he was inclined to look for the Ros-Rus people mentioned by the Pseudo-Zacharias in the 6th century.<sup>2</sup> He observes that even the direction of

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<sup>1</sup> I have also made use of this paper in my evaluation of Jordanes's reports on the Goths.

<sup>2</sup> А. П. Дьяконов, Известия псевдо-Захарии о древних славянах („Вестник древней истории“ № 4, 1939, стр. 83—90). (А. Р. Dyakonov,



the Ante campaigns in the 6th century and those of Rus in the 10th is the same. Nor is there any break in the archaeological materials.

The Ante society of the 6th century had private property as well as slavery. The internal evolution of the Antes led to the formation of the state of Kuyavia, a predecessor of the vast state of Ancient Rus with its centre at Kiev.

It is important to show that social and political process which cannot be ignored in solving our basic problem, namely, the history of the formation and existence of the state of Ancient Rus. This was dealt with in Part II. Here I feel it imperative to stress that the social and political life of the peoples in our South, prior to the emergence of Ancient Rus, is connected with subsequent events on that same territory.

A war of two worlds—slave-holding antiquity and the so-called "barbarian" community—is an important factor in the sum of events, great and small, making up the prehistory of Ancient Rus. It was a war between a more civilized society with its minority of free citizens (the *cives*, *πολίται*), living on slave labour, and a people's society which, in spite of its primitive nature, was capable of progress. It had the sympathies and aroused the hopes of the oppressed masses in the antique states. We are well aware of instances when slaves and plebeians defected to the "barbarians" advancing against Rome. We are also aware of slave uprisings in the slave-holding states which were supported by the "barbarians."

After their defeat by the Huns in the seventies of the 4th century, the Goths lost the political prestige they had enjoyed and were forced to retreat to the west, where they partially intermixed with East-European tribes.

Simultaneously, our South was in constant intercourse with the peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

*The Pseudo-Zacharias. Reports on the Ancient Slavs. Vestnik Drevnei Istorii, No. 4, 1939, pp. 83-90.)*

## 2. THE PEOPLES OF THE CAUCASUS<sup>1</sup>

The history of the Caucasian peoples is highly involved. One is struck by their varied ethnic character. The study of the Caucasian peoples is rendered more difficult by the fact that in the period accessible to the scholar they were always at different stages of social development and had highly intricate relationships with each other, as well as with the outside world. We discover traces of the slave method of production in their long ancient history with the subsequent development of feudal relations.

Scholars unanimously recognize the Van Kingdom of the Chaldeans, or Urartu, as a slave-holding state.<sup>2</sup>

Urartu (between the 14th and the 6th centuries B.C.) with its capital at Tushpa (now Van) occupied the territory of the present-day Armenian and partially the Georgian republics, and was the earliest state in Transcaucasia. Cuneiform inscriptions have been preserved on rocks and stones in various parts of the Transcaucasia telling of the campaigns of the Chaldean kings and their mass deportation of people into captivity and slavery. It ceased to exist as an independent state under the crushing blows of the Cimmerii and Scythians and partially as a result of the clashes with its other adversaries. In the 6th century B.C. the weakened Chaldean Kingdom was subjugated by the Medes and the Persians.

The Armenians are first mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions of the Persian King Darius (522-486). They are a people distinct from the Chaldeans and less advanced in their social development. The long association of

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<sup>1</sup> I am deeply indebted to I. P. Petrushevsky and A. Y. Yakubovsky for their help in compiling the chapters on the peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

<sup>2</sup> В. В. Струве, Урарту—древнейшее государство на территории СССР („Ученые записки Ленинградского государственного университета“, № 19, 1939, стр. 141—143). (V. V. Struve, *Urartu, the Earliest State on the Territory of the U.S.S.R. Uchoniye Zapiski Leningradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, No. 19, 1939, pp. 141-43.)



the Chaldeans and the Armenians under the rule of the Medes, and later the Persians, drew them closer together.

Substantial changes took place in Asia Minor in the 7th-6th centuries B.C. The Ancient Eastern states—Assyria, Babylon, Urartu and Egypt—gave way to the new states of the Medes and Persians.

In his *Anabasis* Xenophon described a considerable part of Armenia which he traversed with an army in 401-400 B.C. The Armenians lived under the tribal system and were mainly engaged in agriculture, cattle-breeding and fruit-growing. Strabo, Plutarch, Tacitus and Pliny report on the further evolution of social relations among the Armenians. By the 1st century B.C. we find them living in a vast state ruled by Tigran the Great (96-95 B.C.).

It is in that period that we find slavery developing in Armenia. It played a conspicuous part, but, according to available written sources, it never really replaced peasant labour.

The international scene at the time was highly unfavourable to Armenia—she found herself wedged in between two adversaries, Rome and Parthia, with whom she waged a persistent struggle.

I believe the Iberians developed along similar lines. These ancestors of the Kartvels—the Georgians—held sway in what is present-day Georgia in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. They were known as Albanians to the Greek authors, and their country—Soviet Azerbaijan—as Albania. By the 3rd-1st centuries B.C., Iberia and Albania had their own kings and governments. Strabo (second half of the 1st century B.C. and early 1st century A.D.) says that the population of Iberia consisted of four main estates: the basilei, the priests, the ploughmen-warriors, and the common people (οἱ λαοί). "They held property in tribes," says Strabo. "It was administered and disposed of by an elder." Academicians Javakishvili, Manandyan and Janashia, are agreed that λαοο are dependent peasants who were akin in status to

the colonate. Strabo makes no mention of slaves, but their existence should not be doubted. Georgia, like Armenia, waged a vigorous but unsuccessful war against slave-holding Rome.

There were a number of Greek colonies on the Caucasian Black Sea coast, namely, Phagis, Dioscuria and Pituntus.

The trade routes between Europe and Asia crossed Transcaucasia and there was a struggle to control it between Rome (1st century B.C.-4th century A.D.), and later Byzantium (5-7 centuries), on the one hand, and on the other, the Parthian Kingdom in Iran (ca. 250 B.C.-226 A.D.) and, later, the Central Asian Kingdom (the Sasanid dynasty, 226-651 A.D.). In the 4th century Christianity became the state religion of feudal Armenia, Iberia (Georgia) and Albania. This led to the extension of the cultural ties which had long existed with the Greco-Roman world. Alphabets were invented in Armenia and Georgia (in the first half of the 5th century) with the subsequent development of the art of writing. Some believe, however, that the art of writing was known in these countries before the adoption of Christianity and that it was evolved on the basis of the Aramaic (Syrian) alphabet. An Albanian alphabet was also created.

In the 4th-6th centuries A.D. Transcaucasia was ruled by Sasanid Iran, while the Armenian, Albanian and Georgian kingdoms ceased to exist from 428, 491 and 532 respectively. In the 1st-4th centuries Transcaucasia was attacked by the Alans (the ancestors of the Ossetians) who lived in North Caucasus and by the Huns in the 5th century, the Savirs, and then the Turks, in the 6th century, and the Khazars from the 7th century on.

The Arab conquest of Transcaucasia began in 641 and by the early 8th century Armenia, Albania (including Derbent) and Eastern Georgia were integrated in the Arab Khalifate. The Moslem religion began gradually to spread.

The Arab Moslem feudal lords ruled side by side with



the local Armenian and Georgian Christian feudal lords and intensified the exploitation of the peasantry. This gave rise to an almost constant series of peasant uprisings mainly in the areas around the Caspian Sea (8th-10th centuries). The red banner was the symbol of these uprisings (the first in 778). The uprising of peasants and artisans in 816-837 in Azerbaijan and Western Iran, the so-called Khurramites uprising led by their able chief Babek, was the most prominent. It shook the Arab Khalifate and was only quelled with great difficulty.

Cities, handicrafts and trade developed in Transcaucasia between the 7th and 10th centuries, particularly in the latter. Berdaa (in present-day Azerbaijan), Derbent, Tiflis (Tbilisi), Dvin (in Armenia), Ganja (present-day Kirovabad) were the major cities of the period. Transcaucasia exported to the East silk, woollen and cotton fabrics, carpets, madder, cochineal, furs, fruits, honey, fish, horses, donkeys and rams. Transcaucasian cities developed a brisk trade with East-European countries. Arab merchants went up the Volga to the far north-west, and by various water-ways reached the Baltic shores. In the south-west they went as far as the Dnieper and beyond it. Khazar, Daghestani, Ossetian, Russian (and Slavs in general) and Pecheneg slaves were available in great numbers on the markets of Derbent and other Transcaucasian cities for export to the East. Baku oil was exported as early as the 10th century. It was used mainly for military purposes (vessels catapulted with incendiary material).

Great ramparts were built around Derbent by the Iranian kings in the 5th-6th centuries A.D. as a protection against the incursions of the northern peoples. They were restored in 733 by the Arabs and their ruins are to be seen to this day. Nevertheless, the Khazars repeatedly invaded Transcaucasia in the 7th-9th centuries.

The Rus came to Transcaucasia by sea in the 10th century (the campaigns of 912 and 943-944; in the latter they reached Berdaa, one of the largest cities of Transcauca-

sia). After the defeat of the Khazar Kingdom by the Kiev Prince Svyatoslav, Rus influence spread to the North Caucasus (the Rus principality at Tamatarkha or Tmutarakan).

With the break-up of the Arab Khalifate into a number of feudal states several polities emerged in Transcaucasia, some Christian and others Moslem. Five kingdoms emerged in Armenia, the biggest of them being the Shirak Kingdom (the Bagratid dynasty, 864-1045). Its capital at Ani (since 961) was one of the biggest and most beautiful cities of Asia Minor. Its ruins are a veritable museum of mediaeval Armenian art. In 1045, most of Armenia with Ani was integrated with Byzantium, but it was soon conquered by the Seljuk Turks (1064-71).

The kingdoms of Abkhazia, (i.e., West Georgia), Tao-Klarjeti and Kartlinia, formed in the 9th century in Georgia, merged into a single Georgian Kingdom in the late 10th century. The growth of Georgia's political influence, stunted in the 11th century by the Seljuk invasion and the struggle between the kings and the big feudal lords, became particularly evident in the 12th and early 13th centuries. David II the Builder (1089-1125) effected a series of reforms designed to enhance the power of the king through a limitation of the privileges of the feudal notables and the Church. Side by side with the feudal army a hired army of 40,000 Kipchaks (Polovtsy) was organized. The latter began to play a noteworthy part in the history of Transcaucasia. In 1122, the Georgians recaptured Tiflis from the local Moslem emir, in 1123 they subjugated Shirvan (the north-eastern part of present-day Soviet Azerbaijan) and in 1173 they recaptured Ani, which was then held by the Kurd emirs of the Sheddadid dynasty. The Armenian population actively assisted the Georgians who were akin to them in culture and whom they regarded as liberators.

Georgia flourished under Queen Tamara (1184-1213). Her power was recognized throughout Transcaucasia, except Derbent. In her time Armenia was completely liberat-



ed from the Kurd and Seljuk emirs. A crushing defeat was inflicted on the Asia Minor Seljuks in 1203. The Georgians made incursions into the heart of Iran. Georgia also played a conspicuous role in the formation of the semi-Greek, semi-Georgian Trabzon "empire" (1204-1461).

Under Georgian rule Georgia and Armenia became separate vice-gerencies of the Mkhargrdzeli (the Dolgoruky, Zacharides) princes and prospered considerably. Their culture also flourished in the 12th and early 13th centuries. It was then that Georgia had her neo-platonic philosopher Ioann Petritsi and Shot'ha Rust'hveli, a poet of world fame.

In the 12th and early 13th centuries the north-eastern part of Azerbaijan was occupied by the Shirvanshakh kingdom with its capital at Shemakha, a centre of the silk trade with Italy, among others. Shirvan was held in vassalage to Georgia and the two had very strong political, economic and cultural ties.

South and south-west Azerbaijan was ruled by the Azerbaijan atabeks (the Ildeghizid dynasty, 1136-1225). Their capital was at Tebriz.

Rus had considerable commerce with Transcaucasia. Georgy (Yury), Andrei Bogolubsky's son, was Queen Tamara's first husband. In 1175, Shirvanshakh Akhsitan with his allied Georgian troops defeated a Rus fleet of 70 ships serving the Derbent emir near Baku.

Georgian and Armenian art influenced architecture in Rostov and Suzdal Rus (the Dmitry Cathedral in Vladimir).

### 3. THE PEOPLES OF CENTRAL ASIA

Rich areas were to be found in the valleys of the Syr-Darya, Zeravshan, Kashka-Darya, Amu-Darya, Murghab and Tejan as far back as the first millennium B.C. These were agricultural oases based on artificial irrigation by means of canals fed by mountain rivers. Different nomad-

ic tribes lived around these oases. The Sogdians—along the Zeravshan and Kashka-Darya rivers, the Khorezmites—along the lower reaches of the Amu-Darya, the Baktrians—south of Amu-Darya—were peoples known from hoary antiquity. We find them within the early Iranian (Akheménid) kingdom as early as the 6th century B.C. After Alexander the Great conquered Iran, he vanquished the Central Asian regions including Samarkand. The memoirs of Greek writers who accompanied him say that there were many cities in that agricultural country even at that early date. Subsequently, by the 6th century A.D., Merv, Bukhara and Samarkand came to the fore. They lay along the ancient trade route from Iran and the Caucasus to Mongolia and to China. The territory now occupied by our fraternal Soviet republics—the Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik—was studded with the castles of big feudal landowners who were then called Dekhans.<sup>1</sup>

The Dekhans dominated the agricultural population which was diligently engaged in cultivating the oases, where wheat and barley, as well as cotton, rice, grapes, mulberry and fruit-trees were grown.

The art of writing was known (many documents in Sogdian have been preserved). The transit trade served to strengthen cultural ties with Asia Minor, the Caucasus, Iran, India and China. This resulted in the spread of Christianity, Zarathustraism, Manicheanism and Buddhism. In the 60's of the 6th century A.D., a powerful state of Turkic nomads arose in the steppes of present-day Kazakhstan and subjugated the civilized oases.

By the middle of the 7th century, the Arabs conquered what is present-day Turkmenistan, and early in the 8th century the areas to the north-east of the Amu-Darya (the *Maverannakhr*—literally, "that which is beyond the river"). The Arabs defeated and threw back the Turkic nomads as well as the Chinese, who had infiltrated into

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<sup>1</sup> Today *dekhan* means a Central Asian peasant.



the area around Ferghana. After the disintegration of the Arab Khalifate there emerged in Central Asia the Samanid Kingdom (874-1005), with its centre at Bukhara, in which the Tajiks held sway. The Central Asian oases became very prosperous in the 8th-10th centuries; their city life developed and Merv, Bukhara, Samarkand, Urgench, etc., became big flourishing cities. Among the prominent intellectuals of the time who wrote in Arabic were the famous mathematician Mohammed al Khoresmi (late 8th and early 9th centuries) through whose works Europe first came to learn about algebra and logarithms; the geographer Ahmed al Balkhi (middle of the 9th and early 10th centuries), one of the greatest Moslem scholars Biruni (middle of the 10th and early 11th centuries), the free-thinking philosopher Ibn Sina (Avicenna, late 10th and early 11th centuries), and the great poets Rudaki and Daqiqi (10th century) who wrote in Tajik.

In the late 10th and early 11th centuries Central Asia to the east of the Amu-Darya was conquered by nomadic Turkic tribes who had adopted Islam and were united under the rule of the Karakhanid dynasty. After the fall of the Samanid Kingdom the areas to the west of the Amu-Darya (present-day Turkmenistan) for a time remained within the Ghaznevid Kingdom which sprawled over present-day Afghanistan, Eastern Iran and North-West India. After the battle of Dendenakan (1040), however, these were conquered by the Turkmens led by the Seljuk dynasty. Following the disintegration of the Seljuk Empire (1092) Merv became the capital of the Eastern appanage of the Seljuks. In 1141, the Turkic Karakhanids had to submit to the heathen Karakitais, a nomadic people, probably of Mongolian origin, which had shortly before been forced out of North China and had settled in present-day Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan). From the second half of the 12th century the Khoresm Kingdom in the lower reaches of the Amu-Darya grew perceptibly stronger. Tekesh, the Shah of Khoresm (1172-1200), succeeded in conquer-

ing what is present-day Turkmenia and practically all of Iran. Mohammed, Shah of Khoresm (1200-1221), allied with the Naiman tribe, which was forced out of Mongolia by Genghis-Khan, defeated and broke up the Karakitai Kingdom and integrated Bukhara, Samarkand and other areas to the north-east of the Amu-Darya in his possessions (1210). Thus, shortly before the Mongolian invasion, all of Central Asia and Iran were included in the Khoresm Kingdom with its centre at Urgench.

Varied forms of intercourse had for a long time existed between the Central Asian peoples and Rus. Nomadic Asian cattle-breeders repeatedly appeared in the steppes around the Azov and Black seas. Rus alternately fought them and made peace with them. They campaigned jointly and concluded agreements on service. Rus set apart some of her land for them to settle on, and in the course of this turned some of them into her subjects. A lively trade and cultural intercourse, particularly under the Arab Khalifate, was carried on along the Volga between the East and the peoples inhabiting the Eastern European plain up to the very shores of the Baltic.

#### 4. GREEK COLONIES ON THE BLACK SEA

The Greeks began to infiltrate into this country across the Black Sea at a very early date (early 7th century B.C.). Permanent Greek settlements arose on the coast in the 6th century B.C. The Black Sea and, in part, the Azov Sea coasts were literally studded with Greek colonies which showed a definite tendency to spread farther north.

These were the centres of a highly developed civilization and could not but leave a marked impression on the development of the backward neighbouring peoples. Constant economic intercourse between the Hellenes and the "barbarians" was impeded by the practice of the Greek slave-holding states of replenishing their slave reserves



from among the "barbarians." The successful development of the latter made them a growing threat to the very existence of the slave-holding states. The insurgent slaves of the Bosphorus Kingdom unquestionably enjoyed the sympathies and support of the "barbarian world."

In the middle of the first millennium B.C. the Greek colonies Hellenized the Scythians and a part of the Scythians who were neighbours of the Greeks in the 3rd century were accordingly called *μιξέλληνες*, i.e., semi-Greeks, "not pure Hellenes," but we can safely speak of the "barbarization" of the Greeks themselves late in the 1st century A.D.

"The size of the city of the Borysthenites (Olbia—*Author*) is out of all proportion to its former fame," says Dion Chrysosthom (second half of the 1st and early 2nd centuries A.D.). "This is due to repeated devastations and wars, for it has long been situated among the barbarians, and the most warlike to boot. It is constantly being attacked and has been captured several times. Its latest and most violent destruction occurred not more than 150 years ago, when it was captured by the Gets along with the other cities on the left bank of the Pontus up to Apollonia. As a result, the affairs of the local Greeks fell into extreme disorder. Some of the cities were not restored at all, while others remained in a poor state. Besides, they were overrun by a mass of barbarians..."

Borysthenite Callistratus, a friend of Dion's, met the latter on horseback. "He wore a huge horseman's sword, and was dressed in broad trousers and *other Scythian* accessories. He wore a thin black cloak on his shoulders such as the *Borysthenites* usually wear. Their other clothes are mostly black, according to the custom of the *Scythian* tribe, which, I believe, due to that very fact, has been named the melanchlens by the Hellenes." This is an apt illustration of what was happening in the south of this country at the dawn of the new era. Warlike Rome took the slave-holders under its wing and by supporting the

slave system, halted the downfall of antique society for some three centuries, but the tide of history had definitely turned in favour of Rome's enemies, the new peoples who were the bearers of rejuvenation for the moribund slave-holding world and whom the citizens of Rome disdainfully styled "barbarians."

It becomes clear that similar processes were in progress in other parts of this country at different periods—in Central Asia and the Caucasus. This went on abroad too, in Western Europe and Asia Minor.

Among the numerous Greek colonies, particular fame was won by Tira (in the Dniester, or Tirasa estuary), Olbia (in the Southern Bug or Gipanis estuary), Chersonesus, Feodosia, Pantikapeus, Fanagoria, Dioscuria, etc. All these were slave-holding city states, typical of Greek antiquity.

In the 4th century, Pantikapeus became the centre of a vast slave-holding state which included some of the Greek cities on the Black Sea coast. It was the Bosphorus state. Its frontiers were in a state of flux. In its hey-day it stretched from the Chersonesus in the west to the Kuban in the east, and to the Don estuary in the north. It thus becomes evident that it included people who lived on that territory from time immemorial. Bosphorus carried on an extensive trade with Attica and the cities on the southern coast of the Black Sea. It exported corn, fish, timber, furs, hides, wool and other raw materials. Its commerce with the Athenian Republic was of particular importance. Attica, which was short of corn, received half of its requirements from the Bosphorus.

In the 2nd century B.C. the Bosphorus Kingdom was in Rome's sphere of influence. In the 3rd century A.D., the weakened Roman Empire found itself incapable of controlling the Black Sea coast. It was the Goths who put an end to the almost millennium-long existence of the Bosphorus Kingdom.

In the first half of the 8th century, the Khazars were forced out of Transcaucasia by the Arabs. This big multi-



tribal kingdom lacked the means to control its temporary tributaries and defend its possessions against the attacks of its neighbours. It often asked Byzantium for assistance. This predatory state fell apart in the 10th century.

## 5. EASTERN SLAV TRADE

A lively trade had long been carried on in that part of Eastern Europe which became an arena for the activities of the Slav tribes. It comprised the area around the Dnieper, Lake Ilmen, and the Oka and the Volga basins. Archaeological investigations reveal the very ancient origin of this trade. The Dnieper area established contacts with the Caucasus as early as the 5th-4th centuries B.C. Its ties with the Greek Black Sea colonies were established at approximately the same time. We find the Romans in that area in the 1st-3rd centuries A.D. Caches of Roman coins are scattered along the Kuban, Don, Dnieper and Vistula water-ways. Later (in the 3rd-6th centuries A.D.) we see its trade relations with the Goths. Starting from the 8th century a vigorous trade is carried on with the Arabs, or rather, with the people of the East who were within the Arab Khalifate. This "Arab" period of trade lasted approximately up to the 10th century. In the 9th, parallel to it, Rus trade with Byzantium was markedly intensified—first with Korsun and then with Constantinople. Trade contacts were simultaneously established with Western Europe. Trade with the East was carried on mainly along the Volga and its tributaries. Merchants from the East travelled to the Baltic Sea via the upper reaches of the Volga. The westernmost point of Eastern trade was the Island of Gottland on the Baltic. Some 24,000 Arab coins and 14,000 fragments as well as about 200 Byzantine coins were found on that island and on the Swedish coast. The bulk of them date back to the 10th century, and some to the 9th and the 11th centuries. Western coins were also

discovered—an indication that West-European, Byzantine and Eastern merchants met regularly there. Rus merchants must have taken part in that trade.

The Baltic shore was the northernmost boundary of this extensive trade, and its southernmost—the Byzantine possessions and the Khazar Kingdom. The latter was a parasitic state situated between the lower reaches of the Volga and the Don, and the Caucasus.<sup>1</sup>

Its population lived under a predatory semi-nomadic economic system and was also drawn into the trade between the Caucasus, Central Asia and Iran, on the one hand, and Kiev Rus and Novgorod, on the other. Their merchants traded in furs, wax and hides, which came from the Kama and farther north, in return for fabrics and arms from the Caucasus and Asia. This trade was carried on mainly along the Volga. The city of Semender, and later Itil, were located on Khazar territory. The ruins of the latter should be found somewhere around present-day Astrakhan. The Khazar fortress of Sarkel stood on the Don.

Slavs coming from the state of Ancient Rus began to penetrate into that area with increasing vigour from the 10th century onwards, following Kiev Prince Svyatoslav's victorious campaigns against the Khazars. At all events, Sarkel became a city with a predominantly Slav population by the 11th century.

The Bulgarian Kingdom was situated in the middle reaches of the Volga and partially in the Kama area. The bulk of its population was Turkic. It subjugated the neighbouring Finnish and Slav tribes. This kingdom controlling the Volga water-way carried on constant trade with the Khazars, Arabs, Varangians, Slavs and Finns.

It is self-evident that this brisk trade over the entire

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<sup>1</sup> Б. А. Рыбаков, Русь и Хазария (Сб. статей „Академику Б. Д. Грекову ко дню 70-летия“, М. 1952, стр. 76—88). (B. A. Rybakov, *Rus and Khazaria*. Collection: *To Academician B. D. Grekov on His 70th Birthday*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 76-88.)



Slav territory and the movement along the chief waterways of the East-European plain could not but have its effect upon the Slavs. The Slav peasant, living on the fruits of the land, produced with his own hands, and lacking either surpluses for sale or money for purchase, was not concerned with this trade and the foreign luxury articles it offered. It was a different matter with the ruling class. The princes, boyars and merchants greatly valued the opportunity of actively participating in it. In this manner, the princes disposed of the tribute collected from their subjects, the boyars sold their war booty and the quit-rent (in kind) which came from the population, while the merchants traded in the products and commodities which fell into their hands in various ways.

Beginning from the 9th century, the route from the Baltic to the Black Sea became particularly profitable and important to the Slavs. The chronicler deems it necessary to give a detailed description to demonstrate its importance. It was a very long route. It ran from the Baltic along the Neva to the Great Nevo Lake (later known as Lake Ladoga, after the city of Ladoga on the Volkhov) and from there on along the Volkhov, Lake Ilmen and the Lovat, which empties into it. A strip of land separates the Lovat from the upper reaches of the Dnieper, which flows into the Russian (Black) Sea. One could also sail via the Baltic to Rome, thence by another sea to Constantinople, and then across the Black Sea to the Dnieper.

The chronicler, being well versed in the economic geography of his country, was well aware of the importance of the place from which the Dnieper originates. The "Okovsky" forest is the source of the mighty rivers which are of utmost importance to the country's economy: from there the Dnieper flows south, the Western Dvina to the Baltic in the west and the Volga to the east where it empties in 70 channels into the Khvalissk (Caspian) Sea. These routes take one to various countries, says the chronicler, and the major Rus cities sprang up along them.

Their diverse ramified trade ties were highly important to their economic and political growth. They very naturally became the centres of Slav tribal groups at a very early date, before the Varangians appeared in Europe. The two most powerful centres were located at either end of that great water-way—Novgorod in the north and Kiev in the south.

## 6. THE FIRST MENTION OF KIEV AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ANCIENT RUS

It would appear, therefore, that the state of Ancient Rus did not originate in a vacuum. Its emergence is a political fact dating to comparatively recent times. It is one of the latest links in the chain of political events in Eastern and particularly South-Eastern Europe between the 6th and 9th centuries.

Kiev became the centre of that state.

But before the country and the people long inhabiting it began to unite under Kiev, political alliances with centres of their own had appeared in various parts of that vast territory. This is first reported by Jordanes. In 375, Vinitar, an Ost-Goth chieftain, "wishing to show his boldness, made an armed attack on the Antes" and was defeated. Eventually Vinitar succeeded in vanquishing the Antes and captured their prince (*regem*) Bozh whom he crucified with his sons and 70 elders. This proves that the Antes had powerful military leaders as early as the 4th century who ruled over a considerable part of them, if not all.

It must be admitted that there is very little accurate information on subsequent political events among the Eastern Slavs. Still, we are inevitably faced with the question as to what went on among the Eastern Slavs, whom the Byzantine authors and Jordanes consider the bravest, the most numerous and powerful among the Slavs, at a time when there were clear indications that a governmental



system was taking shape among the Czechs and the Bulgarians.

Subsequent events are partially revealed by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* and some Arab testimonials.

The *Chronicle* tells us that the Slavs lived on the Danube "and then a people came from the Scythians, i.e., from the Khazars, called the Bulgarians and settled on the territory around the Danube, inhabited by the Slavs." The Turkic Bulgarians arrived after the Slavs were firmly settled. "After this the Ugri Biellii arrived," and they too "settled on the Slav land." They "ousted the Volochy" who had "earlier taken the Slav land. These Ugrians appeared in the time of King Heraclius. . . . In this period the Obry also appeared. It was they who campaigned against King Heraclius and nearly captured him. These Obry also fought the Slavs, and subjugated the Duleby, who are also Slavs. . . . And God destroyed them, and they all perished, and there was not a single one of the Obry left. . . ."<sup>1</sup> This story in the *Chronicle* is corroborated by a report by Masudi. This conscientious and reliable Arab historian and geographer tells in his *Meadows of Gold* that, at one time, one of the Slav tribes, which he calls the Volynyane, held sway over the others. It was headed by King Majak who was obeyed by all the other kings. This political alliance broke up owing to internal dissension and each tribe elected its own king.<sup>2</sup> The *Chronicle* makes it clear that the Volynyane and the Duleby are identical. Kluchevsky established this fact long ago. "It may be surmised," he wrote, "why the Kiev legend recorded only the Duleby in that period of the Avar invasion. At that time they held sway over all the Eastern Slavs. The latter were named Duleby after them, much the same as they were later named Rus after the most

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, pp. 10-11; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> A. Y. Garkavi, *Stories of Moslem Writers About the Slavs and Russians*, p. 135.

prominent region of the Russian land, because it was only the Kiev region that was initially called Rus. Neither the Polyane, nor Kiev itself existed at the time of the Avar invasion, and the bulk of the Eastern Slavs was concentrated further to the west, on the slopes and in the foot-hills of the Carpathians.... We thus find a major military alliance led by the Duleby prince, among the 6th-century Slavs in the Carpathians. The protracted struggle against Byzantium served to cement that alliance and united the Eastern Slavs. This first attempt on the part of the Eastern Slavs to unite for their common weal was still remembered in Rus in Igor's time (when Masudi wrote—*Author*) and this gave an Arab geographer an opportunity of recording it in some detail. A century later, at the time of Yaroslav I, a Rus author recorded only a poetical fragment of this historical reminiscence. This military alliance marked the "very beginning of our history": it "began in the 6th century on the very edge, in the south-westernmost part of our plain, on the north-eastern slopes and foot-hills of the Carpathians."<sup>1</sup>

Some of his statements are erroneous. It was not "the very beginning of our history." It was not only the Kiev region that was known as Rus, for the Polyane very possibly existed in the 6th century. But his main idea is correct. This is indicated above all by the numerical strength of the Duleby. The toponymy testifies to the vast expanses occupied by them. Westberg's and Presnyakov's assertions that Masudi's and the chronicler's reports on the Duleby allegedly apply to Czechia, because she had a piece of territory inhabited by them, is, first of all, at variance with the toponymy. The bulk of the names which are derivatives of Duleb are to be found this side of the Carpathians. Besides, and this was noted by Shakhmatov, the Rus chronicle lists the Duleby as a *Russian* tribe, and recalls that "there is a saying in Rus to this day" in which

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<sup>1</sup> V. O. Kluchevsky, *A Course of Russian History*, Part I, pp. 103-04.



mention is made of them. Lelewel also insists on the Duleby being Russian and gives a number of geographical names which the area to the east of the Moldava, south of the Sazava in Czechia, has in common with the Dniester and Pripyat basins, the Volyn and Eastern Galicia. The Duleby, according to Niederle, were numerous in Pannonia and Horutania.<sup>1</sup>

Shakhmatov's studies of the Russian people's history have led him to the following important conclusion: "It can scarcely be doubted that its life was centred around some tribal nucleus which also served as a basis for a political organization.... Most probably, Volyn, Volyn region, was such a nucleus."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the Antes, like the Southern and Western Slavs, had a political organization of their own as far back as the 6th and 7th centuries. The conditions outlined above were ripe for such a development. The next report belongs to the Arab geographer, Jaihani, who wrote in the 10th century, but used earlier sources. He says that there were three Slav alliances, each headed by a king, on the East-European plain. One of them was Kuyavia with the city of Kuyava. It traded with its neighbours and admitted foreign merchants. The other two were Slavia and Artania. The latter was near "Khazar," a warlike country which admitted of no foreigners and levied tribute on the border regions of Rum (Byzantium).

It is easily surmised that these were the Kiev land, the Novgorod land and, apparently, the Rus around the Black and Azov seas, possibly headed by the city of *Ῥωσία*. Later, it ceased to be an independent polity and is probably for that reason not mentioned in subsequent reports. The Kiev and Novgorod lands existed independently until their integration under Kiev in the latter part of the

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<sup>1</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, *The Earliest History of the Russian Tribe*, pp. 20-21, Note 3.

<sup>2</sup> By the same author, *An Outline of the Earliest Period of the History of the Russian Language*, p. XIX. (Italics mine.—Author.)

9th century. This reconstruction of Eastern Slav political history in the "pre-Kiev period" is not improbable in the light of our observations of their economic and social life.

Regardless of the interpretation we give to the various facts dealing with their life between the 6th and 8th centuries, there remains no doubt that in the "pre-Kiev period" they lived in a class society with its political units existing as separate but unstable kingdoms which, however, helped form the feudal system.

Our chronicler did not have any Arab sources at his disposal. When he decided to investigate the origins of his home town, which at the time played a very conspicuous role in European and Asian politics, he had to rest content with different versions of a few legends handed down by word of mouth. They led him to the man who founded that city.

If we are to have a correct approach to Kiev's political history we cannot afford to ignore the man Kiy, in spite of his obviously legendary character. It is very possible that no one had ever seen him, but his existence became absolutely imperative when the question arose as to who first ruled in Kiev.

The story about Kiy is, of course, a legend, but it was compiled to explain the origins of the Polyane princes, who unquestionably existed, prior to the emergence of the state of Ancient Rus with its centre at Kiev. It was a case similar to the Romulus and Remus legend which explained the existence of real Roman kings prior to the emergence of republican Rome, or of Popel and Piast to explain the origins of real Polish princes, etc. Local princes long held their seats among Slav tribes which were successful in defending their independence against the incursions of the principalities maturing around them, but they all perished after being subjugated by their stronger neighbours.

The chronicler tells the story of two brothers, Radim and Vyatko, who, he was told, were among the Poles and later came to this country. Radim settled on the Sozh, and



Vyatko on the Oka. This is an obvious parallel to Kiy, Shchek and Khoriv, and it reveals the chronicler's approach to history as well as to the legends about ancient Polish and Rus ties which were current in folk-lore in his time. But there are other less legendary figures. Jordanes mentions King Bozh of the Antes, and we remember Prince Majak of the Volynyane, as well as Prince Mal of the Drevlyane, Olga's unsuccessful suitor (10th century). Late in the 11th century, we find Khodota and his son among the Vyatichy. *The Life of Stefan of Surozh* mentions the Novgorod Prince Bravlin (early 9th century). Without giving any names, the chronicler insists that similar princes of local origin existed among the Drevlyane, the Dregovichy, the Novgorod Slavs and the people of Polotsk.

But to return to the Polyane. "There were three brothers," says the chronicler, "one was called Kiy, the second Shchek and the third Khoriv, and their sister was Lybed. Kiy settled on a hill where the Borichev ferry is located today, while Shchek settled on a second hill, today known as Shchekovitsa, and Khoriv on a third named Khorivitsa after him. And they built a city in honour of the eldest brother and named it Kiev.... And after these brothers their house began to reign among the Polyane...."<sup>1</sup>

This version, however, was not to the chronicler's taste. He reports another one which he definitely rejects: "Others, who *are uninformed*, say that Kiy was a ferryman, for there was a ferry near Kiev at that time from yon side of the Dnieper, and people used to say: 'to the *Kiyev*<sup>2</sup> ferry.'" He argues at once as follows: if such were the case Kiy could not have travelled to Constantinople. "This Kiy," he says, "ruled with his family, and when he came to see the king, it is said that he was accorded great hon-

<sup>1</sup> *Lawrenty Annals*, 1897, p. 8; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Kiyev*—the possessive case of Kiy.—*Tr.*

ours by the king." The Radziwill Copy of the chronicle shows how great was his predicament ("... to the king, we do not know, but we know only as the story is told").

At all events, the chronicler does not consider these facts authentic and does not insist on the reader taking them at face value. Still, I believe, these legends warrant serious investigation. They reveal that the Rus people did not connect the origin of its history with the Varangians, but rather with local events which had occurred long before the arrival of the latter and independently of them. The legend also explains another vital fact, namely, the rapid assimilation of the Varangians by the Slavs.

In discussing Kiev's early ties with its non-Slav neighbours, we should mention the Bulgarians, the Khazars, the Crimea, the Caucasus and Byzantium, rather than the Varangians. These were countries lying to the south and south-east rather than to the north. Kiev's ties with the North and the Varangians were established later.

The tradition is entirely different in the north, which Masudi calls Slavia. The Novgorod chronicler tells a different story: "...The Novgorod folk, called the Slavs, and the Krivichy and Merya; each had their own *volost*, and their own *gens*; and the Chud had its own *gens*. And they paid tribute to the Varangians a white *veksha* per male; and those that lived among them perpetrated violence on the Slavs, and the Krivichy, and the Merya, and the Chud. And the Slavs, and the Krivichy, and the Merya, and the Chud rose up against the Varangians and drove them beyond the sea; and they began to rule themselves and to build *gorods*. And they rose against each other and began to fight, and there was great warfare and interne-cine strife among them, town was pitted against town, and there was no law among them..."<sup>1</sup>

The Varangians were the Scandinavians who were well known throughout Europe at that time. They were neigh-

<sup>1</sup> *First Novgorod Annals*, 1888, pp. 4-5; *Earlier and Later Versions of the First Novgorod Annals*, p. 106.



bours of the Novgorod land and this determined their mutual ties.

These ties are well described in West-European sources. The Scandinavians and the Danes began to use the overland route into the land of the "Great Lakes" (lakes Ladoga, Onega and Ilmen) at a very early date, thus rounding the Gulf of Bothnia. The Frankish chronicles mention Rarik the Dane, a major naval leader who was famous for his raids on Western Europe. He had secured a foothold in Birke on Lake Mälär on the Scandinavian Peninsula. But there is not sufficient evidence to identify this Rarik with the Rurik of the chronicles.<sup>1</sup>

Scholars are still studying the Rus whom the chronicler often erroneously identifies with the Varangians. (In the chronicles this problem is highly complicated.)

The Arab Jaihani mentions a "Russian" centre. He is quoted by later Arab authors, and one of them, Ibn Ruste, has a highly interesting report: "As for Russia, it is located on an island surrounded by a lake. This island on which they (Rus) live, takes three days to cross. It is covered with forest and swamp. Its climate is unhealthy and damp, and the soil quakes underfoot from the abundance of water in it. They have a king whom they call khakan-Rus. (Khürdādhbih, another Arab author, says that the "Slav king is called a *knyaz*"—*Author.*)<sup>2</sup> They make raids on the Slavs; arriving in ships, they land and take them prisoners. The prisoners are taken to Khazran and Bulgar to be sold."<sup>3</sup> This earliest Arab source which

<sup>1</sup> К. Тиандер, Поездка скандинавов в Белое море, СПб 1906. (K. Tiander, *A Trip by the Scandinavians to the White Sea*, St. Petersburg, 1906); A. Kunik, *Remarque critique sur les Antiquités Russes*; also his *Die Berufung der Schwedischen Rodsen*, St. Petersburg, 1844, p. 140; Крузе, О происхождении Рюрика (ЖМНП, СПб 1836, сентябрь) (Kruze, *The Origin of Rurik. Journal of the Ministry of Education*, St. Petersburg, 1836, September); M. P. Pogodin, *Investigations, Remarks and Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. II, pp. 157-65; Vol. III, pp. 33-38 et al.

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Shakhmatov, *The Earliest History of the Russian Tribe*, p. 56, Note 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

mentions Rus draws a line of distinction between them and the Slavs, but it appears that by Rus he means the Kiev land, and by the Slavs—the Novgorod Slavs.<sup>1</sup>

It is not quite clear where this "Russian" island was located. Some think it was Novgorod, which the Scandinavians called Holmgard, i.e., an island city; others believe it to be Staraya Russa, still others have it on the plain between the Volga and the Oka or on the Caspian. These are but a few of the guesses. It is quite impossible at this stage to give its precise location.

The problem is likewise left unsolved by Tomsen<sup>2</sup> who points to Upland, a part of Sweden opposite the Gulf of Finland north of Lake Mälär, where a strip of the coast was called "Roslagen."

This consonance does not solve the problem of Slavonic Rus, which gave its name to the Russian people in its three branches.

We shall have to take up the search in another part of Eastern Europe.

We are aware of the existence of a southern people called 'Pōs. It is also mentioned by Leo the Deacon. To this we shall have to add the Roksolany, or possibly the Rosalany. Professor Dyakonov's highly interesting

<sup>1</sup> Mahmud al-Kashgari's *Dictionary of Turkic Languages*, compiled in the 70s of the 11th century, but undoubtedly based on earlier sources, contains a map which has valuable facts on the Rus, the Slavs, the Varangians, the Pechenegs, etc. The Rus are located to the north-west of the Caspian Sea, and the text says that an arm of either the Volga or the Don "flows against (or by) the Rus" and that they are neighbours of the Pechenegs. The Slavs are located to the north of the Rus, and the Varangians still further to the north.

Although a line of distinction is drawn between the Pechenegs, Rus, Slavs and Varangians and the world itself is presented in the form of a circle, none the less, I believe it safe to decipher his report as follows: Kiev Rus (the Rus) lies to the north of the Pechenegs, to the north of that lies the Novgorod land (Slovenes), and still further north are the Varangians. (See I. Umnyakov's article in *Trudy Samarkand-skogo Gosudarstvennogo Pedagogicheskogo Instituta*, Vol. I, Issue 1, 1940.)

<sup>2</sup> B. Томсен, Начало русского государства, М. 1891, стр. 68. (V. Tomsen, *The Beginnings of the Russian State*, Moscow, 1891, p. 68.)



quotation of the so-called Pseudo-Zacharias, who wrote in 555, corroborates this. The latter was aware of a southern people called Rus (Ros) living to the north-west of the Lower Don, i.e., approximately in the Dnieper area (cf. the River Ros): "Their (the Amazons'—*Author*) neighbours are the Ros—who have very big bodies." Horses cannot carry them owing to their weight.<sup>1</sup> This may be an allusion to the heavy armour that people wore and their preference for a foot army.

It is no mere chance that the Volga was called the Ros, and that there was a city called 'Ρωσία<sup>2</sup> at the mouth of the Don. There are a number of southern rivers reflecting the name of Ros: the Oskol-Ros, the Ros, a tributary of the Dnieper, and the Narev, the Roska in Volyn and many others.

The root "Ros" and "Rus" in the toponymy of the territory this side of and beyond the Carpathians unquestionably refers to Southern Rus. This fact has been often noted by Russian and foreign scholars. It is only the date of its appearance in the area that is still controversial.

Khvolson believes that "the name Rus was not given to Russia by the Varangians, but was a native name among us and was used in a most general sense at a very early date." There is absolutely no doubt that the name of the people Rus was in use in the south and south-east of this country in the 9th century without any participation of the Varangians. We have already seen that it was in use long before the 9th century.

It was evidently this southern 'Ρως that was mentioned by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople in his sermons of 860 as well as in his *Encyclical* of 866, in which he spoke of the invasion of Byzantium by that people.<sup>3</sup> He calls it first 'Ρως and then Scythians. Photius describes it as a

<sup>1</sup> A. P. Dyakonov, *The Pseudo-Zacharias's Reports on the Ancient Slavs* (*Vestnik Drevnei Istorii*, No. 4, 1939, p. 84).

<sup>2</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. III, p. CLXVI.

<sup>3</sup> Porphyry Uspensky, *Four Sermons by Photius*, pp. 8 and 53.

large and well-known people lately grown stronger due to conquests among its neighbours.

Some scholars think that Rus and Ῥῶς are of different origin, with Rus originating in the north, and Ῥῶς in the south. They believe that through a whim of fate both terms met and continued to exist in the words Rossia and Russky. Brim shared this opinion.<sup>1</sup> His weakest point is that Rus and Ῥῶς are philologically identical and his theory must therefore be discarded.

The same author recalls the former theory according to which Rus was the ancient name of Varangian men-at-arms in general, rather than of any particular Varangian tribe. Constantine Porphyrogenitus recounts that Rus princes travelled to collect tribute μετὰ πάντων τῶν Ῥῶς (with all of Rus, i.e., with all their retinue). It seems that the chronicler also used this terminology when he said of Rurik and his brothers: "And three brothers were chosen, and they took with them all of Rus." (It would be absurd to suggest that the legendary Rurik took the entire people with him!) Brim insists that the word Rus is derived from the Scandinavian root *drôt* which means *druzhina*, or, rather, from the word *drôtsmenn*, signifying men-at-arms. Before it reached the Slavs it passed the Finns where it inevitably and logically lost its initial consonant and the final syllable, becoming *rotsi* by analogy to *riksi* from *riksdaler*. "Rus" was what the Slavs philologically got from *rotsi*.

However, these excessively subtle but erroneous philological theories are entirely superfluous, considering that we find the term Rus in the south in its natural form requiring no philological comment.

In 1940, Yushkov published his article titled *Concern-*

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<sup>1</sup> В. А. Брим, Происхождение термина „Русь“ (Исторический сборник „Россия и Запад“. № I, СПб 1923, стр. 5—10). (V. A. Brim, *The Origin of the Term "Rus."* Istorichesky Zbornik Rossia i Zapad, No. 1, St. Petersburg, 1923, pp. 5-10.)



ing the *Origin of the Russian State*,<sup>1</sup> in which he attempted to give, with the aid of penetrating surmises, a new interpretation of the main sources quoted by the Normanists. Unfortunately, the author failed to analyse all their arguments. His main conclusion is that Rus were not Varangians but Slavs. "Byzantine as well as Arab sources," he says, "mention Rus as a *people* who lived either near the Black Sea or even on its very shores. Masudi calls the Rus "a large *people*," "the memorials call it a numerous *people*..." Ibn Khürdādhbih says that the Russians "are a tribe of Slavs,"<sup>2</sup> etc. I think that these quotations do prove that Rus meant a people. But Yushkov goes on to prove that this ethnical name originated later, and that the Slavs of the 8th and 9th centuries had a "special social group" which bore that name and later gave it to the whole people. He calls this social group merchants who, in his opinion, were "the organizers of the first state on Eastern Slav territory."<sup>3</sup> He then adds professional warriors, artisans and tribal notables and settles them in the cities. He says in conclusion: "In the course of time, these social groups, who spoke a special language, more developed than the dialects of the other Slav tribes, and were more civilized, developing under considerable Arab and Byzantine influence, began to differ so radically from the mass of the members of the community who surrounded them, paid them tribute and were ruled by them, that it became necessary to give these groups a special name. That is how the name Rus originated."<sup>4</sup>

I find it impossible to recognize his view as being correct, because there are grounds to regard the ethnic term Rus as being of earlier origin than the one standing for the "social groups" mentioned in the sources.

<sup>1</sup> See S. V. Yushkov, "Concerning the Origin of the Russian State. (*Uchoniye Zapiski Moskovskogo Yuridicheskogo Instituta NKY SSSR*, Issue 2. 1940, pp. 37-59).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49. (Italics mine.—Author.)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 54-55.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-57.

In 1947, Tikhomirov's article *The Origin of the Names Rus and the Russian Land* proved conclusively that: 1) the term Rus has an ethnical meaning and a geographical one, and 2) it spread from the area occupied by the Polyane to the whole of Rus because it was the Polyane city of Kiev which became its capital: "The Varangians and the Slovenes (Novgorodites—*Author*) who settled in it (Kiev—*Author*) were known as Rus because they began to live in Kiev." In my opinion Tikhomirov has correctly interpreted the following text in the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*: "And Oleg sat in Kiev and reigned there, and Oleg said: 'It will be the mother of Russian cities'; there were Varangians and Slovenes and others in it who became known as Rus." Tikhomirov finds a reliable approach to the solution of the riddle of Rus, whom, according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the Russian princes took with them to collect tribute. He supports his opinion about the spread of the term Rus from the middle Dnieper area throughout the entire state of Ancient Rus by drawing a parallel with other Slav peoples: "It is well known," he says, "that the usual course was for the name of a small tribe to become the name of an entire people, such as was the case, for instance, with the Czechs and the Poles. (Cf. J. Perwo'f, *Slavische Völkernamen*. Archiv für slavische Philologie, B. 8, 1884, S. 26.)<sup>1</sup>

## 7. THE FORMATION OF ANCIENT RUS

When we speak of the state of Ancient Rus we mean the major early feudal state which arose as a result of the integration of Novgorod and Kiev Rus.

We have had occasion to see that before this integration came about the Eastern Slavs had a number of political alliances (the Duleby union, Slavia, Kuyavia, Artania)

<sup>1</sup> M. Tikhomirov, *The Origin of the Names Rus and the Russian Land* (*Sovetskaya Etnografia*, VI-VII, Moscow-Leningrad, 1947, p. 62 et al.).



which we may regard with good reason as the primitive predecessors of the big all-Russian state with its centre at Kiev. They had a notable influence on the country's feudalization.

With a few exceptions our pre-revolutionary scholars dated the beginnings of our state to the notorious "invitation of the Varangians" (the controversy centred mainly on their nationality), i.e., they followed in the wake of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*. Today, we have discarded that tradition, because it is at variance with the facts as well as with theoretical expositions.

We reject the naïve conception that a state is formed by individual heroes. We know that the formation of a state is not a sudden occurrence, but is the result of prolonged social development. We know that states appear in a period when society has already become divided into classes, when relations between them become aggravated and when the economically strongest class assumes power and subordinates the masses.

Consequently, in our attempts to discover the origins of the state of Ancient Rus we should discard outdated scientific conceptions and study the history of the people as a whole, rather than the activities of individuals.

Up to now we have been engaged in the study of the economic and social relations evolved through the ages by the Russian people (in the old sense of the term which includes its three subsequent branches). It must therefore be perfectly clear to us that the premises for the appearance of the state, which had yielded definite results, had matured in Rus considerably earlier than the 9th century. The unification of Novgorod and Kiev is merely one of the major events in Rus's history and is definitely not its starting point. All of Rus's history contributed toward the merger.

Finally, if we take the trouble to analyse the relevant report of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, we shall find that the author had difficulties with the problem of Rus's origins and that he made use of a "theory" on the origin of

states current in his day although this "theory" was often at variance with the facts he reported.

The chronicler who made use of earlier annals from Novgorod and Kiev showed little concern for the activities of the people in the north and in the south. He was preoccupied with the history of the "Ryurik dynasty." Before he reaches the "invitation of Ryurik," his reports are fitful. He does not explain where the Varangians came from and how they were able to gain temporary control over the Novgorod Slavs, the Krivichy, the Chud and the Merya. He glosses over the Khazar conquest of the Polyane, the Severyane and the Vyatichy. He makes use of a report in the *Novgorod Annals* about the "invitation of Ryurik" but, as can easily be seen, adapts it to his own ends.

The *Novgorod Annals* say that the Novgorodites, the Krivichy, the Merya and the Chud, at one time forced to pay tribute to the Varangians, ousted them and "began to rule themselves and to build *gorods* (i.e., to fortify their frontiers). They tell how internecine wars began among them and how they "invited" three brothers: Ryurik, Sineus and Truvor.

The Kiev compiler of the chronicle ignored the report of Varangian violence, but mentioned their expulsion and the flare-up of "internecine strife" which, in his opinion, made the "invitation" of the princes wise and even imperative.

The report of the arrival of the three brothers was transferred from the *Novgorod Annals* into those of Kiev. The early death of Sineus and Truvor left Ryurik the sole ruler in Novgorod.

The Kiev chronicler failed to mention the abortive uprising of the Novgorodites, led by Vadim, against Ryurik, or the fact that, according to the *Nikon Annals*, which undoubtedly made use of earlier sources, the anti-Ryurik movement in Novgorod lasted a long time. The entry for 867 is characteristic: "That same year many Novgorod men ran away from Ryurik." This Novgorod report was not to the liking of the Kiev chronicler.



We should critically analyse the legend about the "invitation," bearing in mind the attitude of the Kiev chronicler who was forced to adapt the legends which were handed down to him to his political scheme.

There is not much information about Rurik in the chronicles.

It is also noteworthy that Metropolitan Hilarion, whose aim it was to glorify the dynasty of Russian princes, does not even mention Rurik. Among Vladimir's ancestors he lists only Svyatoslav and Igor. It would have been otherwise had Rurik played, in the opinion of that learned Rus, any major part in his country's history. Oleg, Rurik's successor (according to the chronicle), is mentioned in Byzantine<sup>1</sup> and Khazar sources.<sup>2</sup>

There is every reason to doubt the accuracy of the legend about Rurik, in whose favour the chroniclers are biased. The invitation of the three brothers is beyond doubt a popular legend current in the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>3</sup>

It is quite possible that the Novgorodites hired auxiliary Varangian detachments. It was done under Vladimir and Yaroslav. But this has nothing to do with their "invitation" which serves the Normanists as a basis for their theory.

In Vladimir's time the Varangians made an attempt to take advantage of their participation in his campaign against Kiev. If we are to believe the chronicler, after they helped him to capture Kiev they declared: "This is our city, we took it . . ." But Vladimir's statesmanship saved the day, and the Varangians went on to Constantinople.

The manner in which the chronicler described the aims

<sup>1</sup> Oleg's 907 and 911 treaties with the Greeks.

<sup>2</sup> П. К. Кокотцов, Еврейско-хазарская переписка в X в., Л. 1932, стр. 118; *его же*, Новый еврейский документ (ЖМНП, 1913, ноябрь). (P. K. Kokotsov, *Jewish-Khazar Correspondence in the 10th Century*, Leningrad, 1932, p. 118, also his *A New Jewish Document*, *Journal of the Ministry of Education*, 1913, November.)

<sup>3</sup> Б. Греков, О роли варягов в истории Руси („Новое время" № 30, 1947, стр. 12-15) (B. Grekov, *The Role of the Varangians in Rus History*, *New Times*, No. 30, 1947, pp. 12-15); A. Stender-Petersen, *Die Varängersage als Quelle der Altrussischen Chronik*, 1934.

and circumstances of Ryurik's "invitation" is explained in the light of his general approach.

Nor have we any reason to put the blame on Nestor for the biased presentation of Rus's origin. There are many contradictory and highly involved opinions on the matter in the *Chronicle*.

If we accept the chronicler's details with a grain of salt, we can still presume that the Varangian Vikings may have been asked for help in the capacity of auxiliaries by one of the contending sides. But this does not warrant the view that they had formed a state. Russian social and political life proceeded on its own without any conspicuous external influence.

The merger of Novgorod and Kiev, i.e., Slavia and Kuyavia, into a single state, without the participation of the Varangians was a highly important milestone in Rus's history.

If we are to believe the chronicles, it was the northern princes who seized Kiev, which forthwith became the "mother of Russian cities" and the centre of the state of Ancient Rus. This, according to the chronicles, took place in 882 (although the date is approximate, of course), when the Novgorod Prince Oleg mustered a big army from among the Varangians, the Chud, the Merya, the Ves, the Krivichy and the Novgorod Slavs. He captured Kiev by means of a ruse, after seizing Smolensk and Lubech. Some scholars contend that a campaign by Novgorod against Kiev was very unlikely and believe a Kiev campaign against Novgorod and the latter's subjugation to be much more probable. I must admit that the chronicler's story contains much that is dubious, yet it sounds very plausible that it was Novgorod that managed to accumulate the forces for a big campaign southwards and the capture of Kiev. Without going into detail, I want to underline the fact of the merger itself, regardless of when and how it occurred. It is an unquestionable fact and one of extreme importance in its consequences.



Kiev enjoyed a number of manifest advantages over Novgorod. It was nearer to Byzantium, which became the object of changing but steadily mounting interest as Kiev Rus advanced economically and politically. Constantinople gradually evolved from a prize which lured every kind of armed prowler, including the Russian, to a trade and cultural centre for the two states. One of them was a decrepit representative of world civilization, while the other was young and vigorous in its growth. The trail to Byzantium had been earlier blazed by the Antes. Kiev neighboured on other countries on the Black and Azov seas (the Danube Bulgaria, the Crimea, the Khazar Kingdom). Finally, Kiev was conveniently situated to hold distant Novgorod under control.

According to the chronicler, after securing a foothold in Kiev, Prince Oleg tried to entrench himself in his new capital and girdled it with a network of fortresses. He imposed a specified tribute on the Ilmen Slavs, the Krivichy and the Merya, and an annual monetary levy on Novgorod. This was followed by the inclusion of neighbouring Slav tribes—the Drevlyane, the Severyane and the Radimichy—into the maturing state.

Until then the Drevlyane, who lived on the right bank of the Dnieper, were independent of the Kiev princes. They had their own princes from among the tribal elders and chieftains. They defended their independence long and hard. Yet Oleg succeeded in making them his tributaries. The Drevlyane, however, only waited for an opportunity to overthrow his rule, and did so directly after he died. The Drevlyane issue was possibly aggravated due to Poland's claims to Eastern Slav territory. In the process of integrating the Slav lands Oleg crushed the Khazars and included the Severyane and the Radimichy in the state of Ancient Rus. He then dispatched his men-at-arms to the lands between the Dniester and the Danube. A part of these offered stiff resistance and surrendered only to Igor, Oleg's successor.

The chronicle reports that Oleg's army campaigned against Constantinople. For that purpose, the chronicler says, Oleg mustered great hordes of I'men Slavs, Krivichy, Drevlyane, Radimichy, Polyane, Severyane, Horvatians, Duleby, Tivertsy, Chud and Merya, who were either his subjects or allies (such as the Horvatians and the Duleby). The campaign was undertaken, according to the chronicle, by land and sea. The Greeks were apparently unable to defend themselves and were forced to conclude an unfavourable peace, followed by a written treaty on Rus-Byzantine relations.

Some of our scholars doubt that the campaign was ever undertaken at all. Bakhrushin, for instance, describes it as "fantastic."<sup>1</sup> Grushevsky considers the date (907) and the details to be a part of a legend, but allows for "some kind of Rus campaigns against Byzantine lands early in the 10th century, and possibly more than one . . . some may have been successful and these gave food for the popular imagination and forced Byzantium to pay a contribution and conclude new treaties which were very advantageous to Rus."<sup>2</sup> Shakhmatov and Presnyakov do not reject the fact of the campaign itself but naturally doubt the date and other details given in the chronicle.

To help us to unravel this skein we have: 1) the treaty with the Greeks dated September 2, 911; 2) the text of the treaty which unquestionably speaks of Rus's military successes; 3) the 944 Treaty which amended the previous one, reducing Rus's advantages after Igor's not entirely successful campaigns against Byzantium. This makes it clear that the campaign was no figment of the imagination, but that it was wrongly dated by the chronicler, who did not read the treaties in the original. A subsequent chronicler made the correction on the basis of the treaties.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin, *Problems of Ancient Rus History (Istorik-Marxist, No. 3, 1937, p. 172).*

<sup>2</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> A. A. Шахматов, Несколько замечаний о договорах с греками Олега и Игоря (Записки нефилологического общества при Петро-



We can therefore safely say that the 911 Treaty was the result of Rus's successful campaign against Byzantium. This is corroborated by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who says: "When the Romeic king (Byzantine Emperor—*Author*) is at peace with the Pechenegs, neither the Rus, nor the Turks can attack the Romeic state (Byzantium—*Author*); neither can they demand of the Romeis excessive sums of money and goods as payment for peace due to the forces the king is able to muster with the aid of that people and pit against them in case they attack the Romeis. As far as the Pechenegs are concerned, they have had friendly ties with the Emperor and, prompted by his messages and gifts, can easily attack the land of the Rus and the Turks, carry their women and children off into slavery and devastate their lands."<sup>1</sup> This picture is drawn from life. It describes an entire system of Rus-Byzantine-Pecheneg relationships, rather than any single Rus campaign.

Under the 911 agreement with the Greeks, the Rus could go to Constantinople unimpeded and trade tax-free. Constantinople supplied Rus envoys and merchants with corn, wine, meat, fish and vegetables for a period of six months. They were given the right to wash in Greek bath-houses "to their heart's content." On their return voyage they were given stores, anchors, rope, sails and whatever else they required. At the same time, Byzantium insisted on having guaranties of her security from the Rus arrivals: the Rus merchants had to stop in the city's suburbs where they were

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градском университете", Вып. VIII, 1915, стр. 385 и сл.) (A. A. Shakhmatov, *A Few Remarks on Oleg's and Igor's Treaties with the Greeks. Zapiski Neofilologicheskogo Obshchestva pri Petrogradskom Universitete*, Issue VIII, 1915, pp. 385 et seq.); A. Y. Presnyakov, *Lectures on Russian History*, Vol. I, pp. 69-73.

<sup>1</sup> Константин Богрянородный, Об управлении государством ("Известия ГАИМК", Вып. 91, М.—Л. 1934, стр. 6). (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *On the Administration of the State. Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Istorii Materialnoi Kultury*, Issue 91, Moscow-Leningrad, 1934, p. 6.) This is how Priselskov interprets it.

registered by Greek officials. They were then admitted into the city unarmed and in groups of 50.<sup>1</sup>

This treaty was sworn to by both sides: Rus took the oath after her own custom (she swore by the Slav gods Peroun and Volos) and the Greeks after the Christian custom.<sup>2</sup>

The year Oleg died the state of Ancient Rus extended over a considerable area.<sup>3</sup>

It is hard to say just what were the relations between Kiev and the tribes and peoples within its state. We are aware, however, that Kiev's dependencies were forced to recognize the authority of the Kiev prince, which means paying him tribute and aiding his military undertakings. Distant Novgorod had in essence similar ties with Kiev. In the East, the Kiev prince had his representative in the land of the Merya, where the city of Rostov, apparently built by the Novgorodites, was situated. The lands of the Tivertsy and the Ulichy, where fighting was still in progress, were situated in the extreme south. The local notables realized the advantages of a strong government for the growth of their economic and political power as well as for defence against the constant threat from without. We know how highly the authors of the *Lay of Igor's Host* and the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* thought of that flourishing period. The population, living on the lands integrated with the state, had to pay tribute to Kiev and supply its prince with manpower. The princes and their men-at-arms turned this tribute into commodities and shipped them abroad, chiefly to Byzantium. A part of it went to fortify the frontier, equip the men-at-arms and the *voi* and cover the other needs of the rapidly growing state.

The ties linking the individual lands within that state

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<sup>1</sup> Novgorod also took certain precautions against German merchants.

<sup>2</sup> The chronicler had good reason to mention these gods in his commentary on the treaty: Igor's 944 Treaty mentions Peroun in a similar sense.

<sup>3</sup> The year remains unknown: it was 912, according to the *Laurenty Annals*, and 922 in the *First Novgorod Annals*.



could not have been strong. As soon as Oleg passed away the Drevlyane rose up against Kiev, and his successor Igor subdued them once again and imposed an even greater tribute than they had to pay under Oleg. He appointed Sveneld, who had just vanquished the Ulichy, as his vice-gerent. The latter thus found himself in control of a large territory of the Ulichy and the Drevlyane. Although a vassal of the Kiev prince, he himself was one of the most opulent boyars. He had his own possessions and a well-armed and equipped *druzhina*. Even Prince Igor's men-at-arms complained: "Sveneld's men are abundantly supplied with arms and clothes, but we are naked." In this way they allegedly incited their prince to undertake another campaign.

Shakhmatov suggests that Igor clashed with his boyar Sveneld over the Drevlyane tribute and was killed in the affray. Here is the chronicler's version of Igor's death: Igor set out to collect tribute from the Drevlyane, whom he had given to Sveneld. On his way back he allegedly told his *druzhina*: "Go home with the tribute, while I return and look around a while longer." The Drevlyane and their prince Mal. debated the situation and decided to kill the wolf: "If the wolf makes a habit of coming to the fold, he will carry away the whole flock, unless he is killed. And this one, too, will destroy us all, unless we kill him." Igor was killed by the Drevlyane near their city of Iskorosten (945). Olga, his wife, avenged his death cruelly, and their situation worsened.

In Igor's time, the Russian armed forces twice went to the Caucasus and, if we are to believe the chronicle, twice to Byzantium.

In 913 we find them on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Having come to an understanding with the Khazars and promised them half the expected booty, the Russian army crossed their land, fell upon the ill-defended shores of the Caspian and reached Baku. The booty was enormous. Half of it was given to the Khazar khan, but Rus did not succeed in taking home her own half, for most of them were

killed and robbed on the way back through the Northern Caucasus. In 943, we find the Russians in the Caucasus once again. They went by land and captured the city of Berdaa. This time they brought the booty home.

Igor's army twice attacked Constantinople—in 941 and in 944, according to the chronicle. His first campaign was not successful. His boats were destroyed by "Greek fire." Only a few managed to escape. They said that the "Greek fire" descended on their vessels like lightning and set them alight. It appears that the Greeks used explosives which had by then been discovered. Igor's warriors who were captured were executed in Constantinople. The second campaign was somewhat more successful. The fighting never started because, the chronicler insists, the Greeks offered a ransom. A treaty was signed in 944 "for all times, as long as the sun shines and the world stands."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S. V. Bakhrushin in his controversy with me considers this campaign to be also a figment of the chronicler's imagination, because it is not mentioned in the Greek sources whereas the 941 campaign is. The Greeks had no cause to write about a campaign which they, as it were, nipped in the bud, and for which they preferred to pay a ransom. If we bear in mind the situation in Constantinople at the time, the chronicler's story appears quite credible. The struggle against the Arabs and the Bulgarians had greatly weakened the Empire. The Emperor's palace was a hotbed of intrigue. Roman, according to the *Chronicle*, signed the 944 Treaty with his two sons, Stephen and Constantine. The ambitious and talented commander of the fleet, the Armenian Roman, contrived by ruse and violence to have the "lawful" Emperor Constantine VI Porphyrogenitus (who was married to Roman's daughter) raise him to the throne, himself occupying fifth place in the palace hierarchy. Roman banished the Emperor's mother to a convent, enthroned three of his sons and his grandson, and made his fourth son a patriarch.

Roman exposed the incessant plots to restore Constantine to the throne and meted out merciless punishment to the participants. But he failed to discover a plot in his own family and was seized and sent to a monastery on one of the Princes' Islands by his sons Stephen and Constantine, not without the knowledge of Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Barely a month later, on January 27, 945, with a sneer he met both his sons, who had been ousted by the supporters of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

The last plot of the two sons against their father and their meeting on the Princes' Islands occurred somewhere late in 944 or early in 945. Now, since, according to the *Chronicle*, the treaty with Rus was signed jointly by Roman, Stephen and Constantine, they could not have done so



This new treaty reflected the new balance of forces. Rus had to relinquish her former advantages. She had to pay trade dues and undertake a number of obligations with respect to the Greeks. Igor undertook to defend Byzantium by preventing the Bulgarians from entering the Crimea where Byzantium had some possessions (this is a hint at Russian possessions in Tmutarakan). He had to promise not to attack Byzantine possessions in the Crimea (the Korsun land).

After Igor's death, his wife Olga travelled to Constantinople in 957 with a big retinue. We do not know her aims, but we know that she travelled with a great number of merchants and that she promised military aid to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine.<sup>1</sup> From this we infer that she went to Byzantium to conclude an agreement which contained the same basic provisions as the previous treaty.

The relations between the state of Ancient Rus and Byzantium were never smooth and settled once and for all. In 959 Olga took cognizance of the latter's inimical policy and the complicated international situation and undertook a diplomatic manoeuvre. She appealed to the German Emperor for aid in establishing a Christian Church in Ancient Rus. Otto sent his bishop to Kiev in 961, with some delay, for by then relations between Byzantium and Rus had improved. Constantine's successor Roman II asked Olga for military aid in his campaign against Crete, and a Russian army was indeed sent to Byzantium in 961.

The state of Ancient Rus reached the peak of its power

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in 945, as the treaty is usually dated. Igor's campaign and the conclusion of the treaty unquestionably occurred in 944, when major events were in the offing in Byzantium. They explain why the Byzantine rulers preferred a peaceful settlement with Igor to a war which was expected to be very stubborn, according to Bulgarian and Korsun reports. The 944 Treaty was the result of this compromise agreement between Rus and the Greeks. It is less advantageous to Rus than the 911 Treaty, but it bears no traces of a Rus defeat, which would have been inevitable had it been concluded after Igor's failure of 941.

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1910, p. 61; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 44.

under Svyatoslav (died in 972) and his son Vladimir (978-1015).

Svyatoslav's policy was basically similar to that of his father, although he put it into effect with more resolution and vigour. He moved rapidly with his army and knew no defeat in his military undertakings. He campaigned in the area of the Oka and the Volga, against the Vyatichy, the Bulgarians (on the Kama and the Danube), the Khazars, Constantinople and the Caucasus.

The chronicler reports in his item for 964 that Svyatoslav grew up and began "to muster many bold warriors." He then gives us a character sketch of the prince. He was unusually hardy in campaigns, a man of simple tastes who could sleep in the open with a saddle for his pillow. He lived a frugal life, moved about rapidly and resolutely. He never attacked an enemy from behind, but warned him: "I am coming against you." He was invariably victorious.

This description of the man reminds us of the legend contained in a song about Svyatoslav which originated among his men-at-arms. The only thing is whether the qualities thus extolled were genuine.

Information about Svyatoslav is given not only by the Russian chronicler, but also by Leo the Deacon, Cedrenus and Skilitza (late 11th and early 12th centuries), all of Byzantium. Leo the Deacon was Svyatoslav's contemporary. He gives a detailed description of his war with the Greeks and tells us much more of his person than the Russian chronicler. Svyatoslav is also mentioned in the Eastern sources. Consequently, we are in a position to check our chronicler's report on all points.

The fact that Svyatoslav had been heard of throughout the contemporary world and that he was well known in the West and the East shows Rus's major role in international relations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is wrong to qualify Svyatoslav as "a chieftain of a roving *druzhina* constantly in quest of booty and glory" (S. V. Bakhrushin, *The State of the Rurikovichy*, *Vestnik Drevnei Istarii*, No. 2(3), 1938, p. 95), or call his campaigns "military adventures" (S. V. Yushkov, *Essays*



Svyatoslav was much more involved in international relations in Europe and Asia than either of the first two princes, Oleg and Igor. He took part in major international events and often acted in conjunction with other states, rather than on his own initiative. He was one of those who took part in solving European and, to some extent, Asian problems.

A glance at a map of his campaigns will reveal their scale. There is every reason to presume that Svyatoslav fought to the north-east of Kiev and apparently reached the Volga, where he clashed with the Khazars.

Our chronicler's report is amplified by Arab geographer Ibn Haukal, Svyatoslav's contemporary, who wrote in the seventies of the 10th century. He reveals that Rus destroyed Bulgar and devastated the land of the Burtasy. "Today," writes Ibn Haukal, "there is no trace either of Bulgar, or the Burtasy, or yet the Khazars, because Rus destroyed them all and seized their territory, while those who escaped are scattered in the countryside awaiting an opportunity of coming to an agreement with Rus and becoming her subjects."

The war ended with the destruction of the Khazar Kingdom. The same author reports that Rus destroyed the Khazar strongholds of Sarkel, Itil and Semender. The Khazar Khanate ceased to exist. Its remnants in the lower reaches of the Volga were known by the name of Saksins and did not play any perceptible role. Another Khazar settlement

on the History of Feudalism in Kiev Rus, p. 31) because he stood at the head of many peoples in Eastern Europe and the Eastern Slavs above all. His campaigns involve not only his *druzhina* but also a numerous army (Leo the Deacon says that he led 60,000 to Bulgaria, which greatly exceeds a mere *druzhina*). The Hungarians recognized him as their leader and fought under him at the battle of Arcadiopole. It was the complicated international situation and not wanderlust that led him to Bulgaria. Finally, Svyatoslav's foreign policy (like that of his predecessors) reveals a definite system designed to solve the problems which arose as the result of the growth of Ancient Rus and not the arbitrary actions of this or that prince. For details see my *Rus's Struggle for the Formation of Her Own State*. (Б. Д. Греков, Борьба Руси за создание своего государства, М.—Л. 1945.)

is placed by the chronicle in Tmutarakan in the 11th century. (*The Ipaty Annals* for 1083 say: "Igor went from the Greeks to Tmutarakan, seized David and Volodar Rostislavich and began to rule in Tmutarakan, and annihilated the Khazars..." The latter are mentioned once again in 1079.)

Our chronicler gives a brief account of Svyatoslav's victory over the Khazars, the destruction of their capital and his incursion into their possessions in the Northern Caucasus where he conquered the Yasy and the Kosogy (the Ossetians and the Circassians).

Svyatoslav's campaign to the East is described in detail in a course and an article by Academician Bartold, our expert on Central Asian history.

On the basis of Eastern sources the author concludes that the blow dealt the Khazars was so formidable that its repercussions were felt in some parts of the Moslem world.

The population of the Northern Caucasus fled in the face of Svyatoslav's advance and returned only after the end of the war. They returned with the firm conviction that the Khazar Kingdom would not rise and that Svyatoslav's power was so formidable that the only thing to do was to recognize it, submit and return to peaceful labour. Everything Svyatoslav did strengthened this conviction and all his measures were designed to create conditions for the normal economic development of the newly-won territory. Such are the conclusions of Academician Bartold on the basis of Eastern sources.

The Khazar problem was solved by Svyatoslav. His Eastern policy was discontinued because of grave events in the West. He was much involved in Byzantine affairs, which were then in a state of crisis.

A Bulgarian state, mainly Slav, but with an admixture of a Turkic element, emerged to the west of the Byzantine Empire in the 7th century. In Byzantium it was known as Misia. By the 9th and 10th centuries Bulgaria became stronger and appeared as an organized and formidable state.



Bulgaria reached her summit under King Simeon Borisovich (885-927). The latter spent his childhood and youth at the court of the Byzantine Emperor, where he was brought up with the sons of Emperor Mikhail. He was the only heir to the Bulgarian throne and the Greeks persuaded him to take the monastic vow in the hope of integrating Bulgaria in their possessions after the death of his father Boris. But as soon as Boris died, Simeon discarded the cassock and fled to Bulgaria, where he became the implacable foe of the Greek rulers.

Under his rule Bulgaria flourished. She almost captured Constantinople. Emperors Leo and Romanus Lekapenus were forced to pay Bulgaria tribute. Bulgaria seized a large part of Byzantium's territory so that only Constantinople surrounded by Bulgarian possessions was left to the Greeks in Europe.

In vain did Constantinople Patriarch Nikolai the Mystic send Simeon humiliating messages penned "in tears, rather than ink." In vain did the Patriarch attempt to intimidate Simeon with talk of an alliance between Byzantium and Rus, the Pechenegs and the Hungarians. The Bulgarian army continued its advance against Constantinople. Had it not been for Simeon's sudden death, probably engineered by the Greeks, Byzantium could have been dealt a decisive blow.

Bulgaria began to lose her power under Simeon's successor, Pyotr the Meek, and fell apart. The Emperor Nicephorus Phocas continued the struggle against the Bulgarians in which he tried to involve Svyatoslav.

The Byzantine Government approached Svyatoslav with a proposal to organize a campaign against Bulgaria and offered gold in return. At the time it had a war with Syria on its hands. Kalokir, a "bold and sly man," as Leo the Deacon describes him, was sent to Svyatoslav with 1,500 pounds of gold. He tempted Svyatoslav with the idea of conquering Bulgaria for himself. Being "impetuous, bold, swift and active" (Leo the Deacon) Svyatoslav did not re-

quire any special incentive. He realized all the advantages obtaining from a campaign against Bulgaria and gave his consent. But he had no thought of furthering the interests of Byzantium.

Byzantium's plan was apparently quite simple. She hoped that Svyatoslav's war against Bulgaria would be detrimental to both her strong neighbours and would help her to restore her former frontiers.

But the Byzantine Government miscalculated badly. Svyatoslav's very first campaign blasted all its hopes. He swiftly captured many Bulgarian towns (80, says the chronicle), penetrated into the heart of the country and decided to settle in Pereyaslavets,<sup>1</sup> the southernmost point on the Danube. He explained this decision by the fact that "all kinds of goods" flowed to that city: "gold, brocades, wines and various vegetables from the Greeks, silver and horses from the Czechs and the Ugrians, skins and wax, honey and slaves from Rus."

Bulgaria had to decide who was the more dangerous of the two—Byzantium or Rus. She realized that Rus had attacked at the instigation of Byzantium. She decided to come to an agreement with Svyatoslav, who saw no reason to side with Byzantium against Bulgaria.

The Byzantine Government had to take new steps. It directed the Pechenegs, who roamed the steppes along the Black Sea shore between Rus and Byzantium, against Kiev.

The Pechenegs were well known in Byzantium. Her Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus (905-959) had deemed it necessary to write a treatise for his son on the way they should be dealt with and made use of to Byzantium's advantage in the complicated international relationships. He saw the advantages of pitting the Pechenegs against Rus.

This forced Svyatoslav to leave Bulgaria and return to

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<sup>1</sup> There is some divergence of views on the location of this point which so attracted Svyatoslav. It may have been located in the Danube estuary.



Kiev to drive off the Pechenegs. He made short shrift of them and decided to return to Pereyaslavets.

His second war with Bulgaria began very successfully. Both Leo the Deacon and Skilitza report that Bulgarian detachments joined Rus against Byzantium. They were joined by the Hungarians. The Bulgarian throne was occupied by King Boris who had an agreement with Svyatoslav. Like the Bulgarians, the latter was intent on driving the Byzantines from the Balkan Peninsula. Thus, the military alliance of the Russians and the Bulgarians and their struggle against the common enemy of the Slavs dated back to very early times.

Military operations were conducted on a large scale. Svyatoslav captured Philippopolis and crossed the Balkans. The new Byzantine Emperor John Tzimisces who, in league with Empress Theophano, murdered Emperor Nicephorus Phocas, at first wished to negotiate a settlement with Svyatoslav, but the latter rejected his one-sided proposals. In reply to Tzimisces's attempts at intimidation, says Leo the Deacon, Svyatoslav threatened to seize Constantinople. The Russian army devastated Thrace and approached the Byzantine capital. Tzimisces sent an army under Bardas Skleros against the Rus, but it was powerless to cope with the situation. The Emperor sent reinforcements, but Bardas Phocas's uprising in Asia Minor forced him to recall his troops. Svyatoslav occupied Macedonia.

It was only at the beginning of 971, after the defeat of Phocas, that Tzimisces engaged the Bulgarians and the Rus. His troops captured Bolshoi Preslav occupied by Russian and Bulgarian troops. Leo the Deacon remarks that the Bulgarians "helped the Rus out of hatred for the Romeis, believing the latter to be responsible for the Rus invasion of their land." After this victory, Tzimisces advanced against Dorostol (Silistria) where Svyatoslav was encamped with his army. Realizing that the odds were against Svyatoslav, a part of the Bulgarian notables forsook him and he found himself in dire straits.

The Rus were remarkably staunch in battle, according to Leo the Deacon. The Greeks discovered women among the Rus dead. Svyatoslav himself was wounded.

The Greek historian devoted a considerable part of his composition to a description of Byzantium's struggle against the Rus Prince Svyatoslav. In spite of the fact that the latter was an enemy of his country, the Greek did justice to Svyatoslav and his army. Here is his description of these events:

"Svyatoslav, full of arrogance as a result of his victories... gave the Roman (Byzantine—*Author*) envoys the following haughty reply: 'He would not leave that rich land, unless they (the Greeks—*Author*) gave him a great sum of money.... If the Romans (Byzantines—*Author*) refuse to pay me so much,' he continues, 'they will have to leave Europe, which does not belong to them, and go to Asia. Let them have no vain hopes that the Tauro-Scythians (Russians—*Author*) will make peace with them without this.'"

The Emperor dispatched another peace embassy to Svyatoslav. He observed that peaceful relations between them were of long standing in which "God himself was the intermediary" (a hint at the oaths taken on the treaties—*Author*). He gave the Russians "friendly advice, immediately and unconditionally to leave the lands which did not belong to them." "If you reject this advice," he declared, "it is you who will break up our alliance and not we." Furthermore, he recalled the unsuccessful campaign of Igor, "who, disdaining his oath (apparently another hint at Oleg's treaty allegedly violated by Igor—*Author*), approached Byzantium's capital city with a great army in 10,000 vessels and had to flee for his life with barely 10 ships...." He recalled the violent death of Igor, who was allegedly "taken prisoner by the Germans" (an obvious error on Leo's part). The Emperor added in conclusion: "I do not believe that you will be able to return to your native land if you force the *entire* Roman army to attack you."



Svyatoslav replied: "I see no need for the Roman King to come here: let him not bother to come to our land: we shall soon be camping at the Byzantine gates and shall encircle the city and if he (the Emperor—*Author*) dares undertake the feat we shall meet him boldly and prove to him that we are not poor artisans living off the fruits of our labours,<sup>1</sup> but brave warriors who vanquish their foe in battle, although he, in his ignorance, believes us to be weak women and wishes to intimidate us with his threats as one scares infants with many bogeys."

Military operations became inevitable.

"The troops clashed," writes Leo the Deacon about the battle at Dorostol, "and a violent engagement ensued. For a long time it was indecisive. The Rus, who were famed as victors among neighbouring peoples, regarded the possibility of losing that reputation a great calamity, and fought desperately . . ." Svyatoslav did not lose heart when he found himself in a very difficult situation. When a part of his men suggested the possibility of a retreat, Svyatoslav, says Leo the Deacon, "heaved a great sigh and said: 'If we shamefully give in to the Romans at this time the glory of Rus arms, which helped us to conquer neighbouring peoples and subjugate entire countries without bloodshed, will be dissipated. Let us, therefore, with the valour of our ancestors and with the thought that Rus has been invincible to this day, fight courageously for our lives. It is not our custom to flee for our lives, but it is either to live as victors, or, having performed famous feats, perish in glory.'"<sup>2</sup>

Leo the Deacon then adds: "They say that defeated Taurο-Scythians never surrender alive . . . that this people is

<sup>1</sup> . . . ὡς οἱ βάναντοι τινα δόξα περιβήτοισι . . . Δέοντος Λιαχόνου ιστορία, 1864, t.I, Migne, p. 1816. (*Italics mine.—Author.*)

<sup>2</sup> The *Laurenty Annals* give the following version of his speech: "We have nowhere to go and shall have to oppose the enemy willynilly. Let us not put the Russian land to shame, but lay down our lives, for the dead cannot be shamed. If we run, we shall be put to shame. Let us not run, but stand firm and I shall lead you. If I am killed, think for yourselves." *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 69; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 50.

brave even unto folly, courageous, strong, and attacks all its neighbours, and this is borne out by many, including the divine Ezekiel, who says: 'I send against thee Gog and Magog, the Prince of Ross.'"

However, the superior enemy forces, hunger and the isolation from the homeland forced Svyatoslav to compromise. Leo the Deacon says that of the 60,000 Rus who came to Bulgaria only 22,000 remained, of whom scarcely more than half were capable of bearing arms.

Tzimisces desired peace no less than Svyatoslav. Leo the Deacon calls it a "victory" gained "against all expectations."

The Emperor and Svyatoslav met at the signing of the treaty on the bank of the Danube. The former arrived on horseback wearing gilded armour. Svyatoslav arrived in a boat. The Greeks eyed the Rus prince with curiosity.

"This is how he looked: of middle height, neither too high nor too small, with shaggy eyebrows, blue eyes, flat nose, shaved beard and long thick hair depending from his upper lip. His head was clean shaven, with a shock of hair on one side of it which signified a person of high birth. His neck was thick, shoulders broad and his whole body rather slender. He looked sombre and stern. In one ear he had a golden ring adorned with two pearls and a ruby between them. His clothes were white and did not differ from those of others in anything but cleanliness...." "*Sitting* in his boat, he had a short talk with the Emperor about peace and returned to the other bank."<sup>1</sup>

Svyatoslav retreated, being fully determined to resume hostilities. "I shall return to Rus and come back with a bigger *druzhdina*," said Svyatoslav, according to the chronicler. The Greeks realized this and tried to thwart his plans.

The Greeks and the Bulgarians succeeded in forcing

<sup>1</sup> "История Льва Диякона Калойского и другие сочинения византийских писателей". (*The History of Leo the Deacon of Kaloi and Other Works of Byzantine Authors*, translated from the Greek by D. Popov. St. Petersburg, 1820, pp. 47-48, 65-66, 87, 93-94, 97.) (Italics mine.—*Author*.)



Svyatoslav to leave Bulgaria for a time. True, he was not crushed. He returned with his army, supplied with Greek provisions, but his second campaign did not end in his favour. Eastern Bulgaria fell into the hands of Byzantium once again. Under the circumstances another campaign by Svyatoslav could well be expected.

These interesting events are described in the chronicles of two Byzantine authors—Cedrenus and Zonaras.

The treaty concluded by Svyatoslav with Byzantium in 972<sup>1</sup>—the last of the Rus treaties with the Greeks—was of an entirely different nature to those negotiated by Oleg and Igor. It no longer speaks of Byzantium's obligations towards Rus, but only of Svyatoslav's pledge of non-aggression against the Greek, Korsun and Bulgarian lands, and of the assistance he was to render the Greeks in case of an enemy attack.

There is another highly interesting but obscure document discovered in 1819 by Hase. Its original has been lost but not before it was published several times. It is a diary of the travels of a toparch who was either a Greek, or a Goth. He was a petty prince, possibly in the Crimea<sup>2</sup> (although it may have been the Danube area), and, being pressed by the Khazars, decided to seek the assistance of Svyatoslav "who ruled in the north" and "was proud of his victories." It is true that he does not name Svyatoslav, but the chronology and a number of other facts indicate that it was he.

The latter met the prince amicably and willingly promised him his assistance. He did this the more readily since he himself was preparing for a campaign against the

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<sup>1</sup> There is controversy about the dates of Svyatoslav's campaign, his treaty with the Greeks and his death. Н. Ламбин, А. Куник и В. Васильевский, О годе смерти Святослава Игоревича, СПб 1876. (N. Lambin, A. Kunik and V. Vasilyevsky, *Concerning the Date of Svyatoslav Igorevich's Death*, St. Petersburg, 1876.)

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir's campaign in Korsun, which could scarcely have been as successful as it was if he had no base there, is also an indication that it was the Crimea. Igor's 944 Treaty with the Greeks seems to suggest the same.

Khazars whom he intended to crush. He considered it important to have the toparch as an ally. He supplied the latter with money, and promised him his patronage in the future. But what is most interesting is that he made him satrap of a new territory. And this proves that there were Russian possessions in the Crimea at the time. The latter, incidentally, are clearly mentioned in Igor's 944 Treaty with the Greeks.<sup>1</sup>

Svyatoslav, then, was a major statesman, and not merely the ringleader of a band of vagabonds intent on plunder. It is true that wars at that time did have plunder as one of their aims, but if we restrict our analysis to this fact we shall have a distorted picture of Svyatoslav's political role and Rus's international status. He was active in the East and in the West and played a part in solving cardinal and most complex political issues.

After concluding a peace with Byzantium, Svyatoslav dispatched his voivode Sveneld with his army to Kiev, while he himself stayed to winter in Beloberezhye on the Danube. It is quite probable that this prolonged sojourn on the Danube was due to his political plans. At the Dnieper falls he was met by the Pechenegs, presumably sent there by the Greeks, who apparently knew of his intention to return to Bulgaria with fresh troops. The Pechenegs destroyed his small *druzhina* and killed Svyatoslav. This occurred in 973, when Svyatoslav was in his prime. He was only 35.

After his death the question arose as to who was to rule in Kiev. When he was leaving for his 970 campaign in Bulgaria he left his son Yaropolk in Kiev, his second son Oleg in the Drevlyane land, and his third son Vladimir in Novgorod. After his death the three brothers ruled each in his place for several years. In 977, Yaropolk advanced against Oleg, who was killed in battle. Vladimir fled for his life "beyond the seas" to muster an auxiliary detachment of Varangians. He managed to gather a *druzhina*, returned to

<sup>1</sup> It is hard to locate the toparch's possessions. There is much room here for guesses of varying validity.



Novgorod, went south and seized Kiev. Yaropolk was treacherously murdered.

These major political events were undoubtedly impelled by an inner logic cloaked by the too laconic report of the chronicler. Yaropolk had apparently some grounds for being dissatisfied with his brothers. It may be presumed that Oleg submitted to Yaropolk reluctantly and possibly intended to secede. As a matter of fact, the Drevlyane were not averse to rising up in arms against Kiev to free themselves of its rule. It is very possible that Prince Oleg decided, together with Drevlyane leaders, to secede from Kiev. However, these are only surmises. There are no precise facts to substantiate them.

The chronicler says that the war between Yaropolk and Oleg was caused by a quarrel over the murder of Sveneld, a son of Igor's voivode, by Oleg. Actually this clash was unquestionably caused by far graver events, as is evidenced by Vladimir's behaviour when he learned that Yaropolk had killed Oleg. Feeling, apparently, that he was privy to Oleg's designs, he was frightened, although he was far away in Novgorod.

Vladimir eventually removed all the complications and became the head of the state.

These events indicate that Kiev was still sufficiently strong to maintain its status of "the mother of Russian cities" (i.e., the capital of the state of Ancient Rus).

## 8. ANCIENT RUS AND THE SOUTHERN STEPPE NOMADS

Major events were afoot in the Asian steppes at the time in question, but we, unfortunately, know of them only from scattered and scanty reports. It is natural, therefore, that we do not know why the Turkic peoples were forced to leave the Asian steppes and migrate to Europe. But we are well aware of the appearance of Turkic peoples from neigh-

bouring Asia—the Pechenegs, Torks, Berendeis, often known under the general term of the “black hoods” (Kara-Kalpak), Polovtsy and the Mongols (Tatars)—in the southern Black Sea and Azov steppes.

We have had occasion to learn that the Black Sea territories had their own histories. Various tribes, known to us since Scythian times, roamed and settled there. The Bosphorus Kingdom was at one time located there. Among the tribes that appeared around Kiev, the Pechenegs, according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, roamed between the Volga and the Yaik (the Ural). The detachments of steppe horsemen, which attacked Kiev, possibly included others besides the Pechenegs, because many tribes took part in such expeditions, viewing the Black Sea steppes as their own.

The chronicler sets 915 as the year when “the Pechenegs first came to the Russian land,” but the Khazars were aware of their existence much earlier. A stubborn struggle was in progress between them in the 8th and 9th centuries. The Khazars beat back the Pecheneg attacks with great difficulty. In the early 10th century we find the Pechenegs roaming between the Don and the Danube. They were one day’s journey from Kiev. Emperor Constantine says that the Pechenegs often plundered Rus and inflicted much damage. The Rus tried to live in peace with them because war cut them off from the south, primarily from Constantinople. The Pechenegs would lie in wait for the Russians at the Dnieper falls and there, making use of their difficulties in crossing, massacre or scatter them. In order, therefore, to escape their enmity and to have their assistance, the Slavs tried to avoid wars with the Pechenegs and often concluded alliances with them. The Greeks did likewise. Both traded with them. Rus bought cattle from them.

Between 915 and 1036 there were 16 wars between the Kiev princes and the Pechenegs, apart from minor clashes. The Pechenegs usually attacked Kiev when it was defenceless. This caused the Kiev princes to move the southern frontier somewhat further north, almost up to Kiev



itself, where a number of fortresses were built along the Desna, Osetr, Trubezh, Sula and Stugna as a line of defence against Pecheneg incursions.

These fortresses were manned partially by the same Pechenegs and other nomads (Torks and Berendeis) who entered the service of the Kiev prince and defended Rus frontiers against the attacks of their fellow tribesmen. The bulk of the Pechenegs moved to the Danube and beyond. Other tribes, the Torks and the Polovtsy, followed in their wake. Naturally, this struggle against the Pechenegs was not easy, but they were not invincible. The state of Ancient Rus coped with that threat and managed to defend itself, a fact which testifies to the strength of the Russian people rather than to the weakness of the Pechenegs.

A totally different impression was made by the Pechenegs on Byzantium. Vasilyevsky very correctly observes in his *Byzantium and the Pechenegs*, that a more profound understanding of Rus-Byzantine relationships, and naturally of Rus herself, depends on the study of the Pechenegs and the Polovtsy.

Relations between Rus, the Pechenegs and Byzantium were most intricately interwoven. I do not intend to recount Vasilyevsky's paper, which contains so much material. I merely wish to stress the terror the Pechenegs caused in the Eastern Roman Empire. Driven to despair by the Pecheneg and Turkish threat, the Byzantine Emperor Alexus Comnenus sought help in the West and East. His message to the Western states is very significant: "The Holy Empire of Christian Greeks," he wrote, "is hard pressed by the Pechenegs and the Turks. They plunder it daily and seize its territories. The murders and desecrations perpetrated on the Christians, the attendant horrors are countless and so terrifying to the ear that they are capable of revolting the very air. . . . Almost the entire land from Jerusalem to Greece, and all of Greece with its upper (Asian) regions . . . has been invaded. . . . Constantinople is threatened from land and sea. I myself, as the Emperor, see no

way out and find no salvation: I am forced to flee in the face of the Turks and the Pechenegs, remaining in one city until their approach forces me to seek refuge in another.

"In the name of God and all the Christian teachers I entreat you, warriors of Christ, whoever you may be, hasten to help me and the Greek Christians. We place ourselves completely in your hands. We prefer to submit to your Latins than to the heathens. Let Constantinople fall into your hands rather than to the Turks and the Pechenegs. . . . Hasten with all your people, exert every effort to prevent such (listed above—*Author*) treasures from falling into the hands of the Turks and the Pechenegs. . . ." Such was Emperor Alexis's appeal "to the four corners of the world."

The first crusade was its result. It was initially planned to direct it first and foremost against the Pechenegs to save Constantinople. "In 1091 it was planned to have the Western knights appear . . . on the shores of the Bosphorus to defend the Byzantine Empire and Constantinople. Emperor Alexis was to entrust the future of his empire and his capital to the Franks . . . happy to have evaded Pecheneg captivity. . . . But two Polovtsy khans possibly in conjunction with one of the Russian princes decided the issue otherwise."<sup>1</sup> The two khans were Tugorkhan and Bonyak, while the Russian prince was the same Vasilyok Rostislavich whom David and Svyatopolk had so savagely and treacherously blinded.

It will be easily seen that the Pechenegs caused no panic in Rus, which successfully repulsed, assimilated and integrated them with its dependent peoples.

The Torks were naturally unable to withstand the struggle against the Pechenegs, the Slavs and the Polovtsy and were in part slain in battle and in part destroyed in flight by cold, hunger and disease. They were twice attacked by the southern Russian princes. A part of the Torks together with the Pechenegs entered the service of the Kiev princes. The Pereyaslav principality and the southern territories

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<sup>1</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 90-91, 96.



of Kiev and Chernigov principalities were studded with Tork settlements. They penetrated farther north into Ryazan and even Suzdal principalities. Traces of their settlements are still to be found in many names of streams and localities.

The Polovtsy (Kumany) appeared in the Kiev land the year following the defeat of the Torks. They appeared in Europe in the 30's and 40's of the 11th century, pushing the bulk of the Pechenegs to the west, into Hungary. Rus's first peaceable encounter with the Polovtsy is reported in the chronicle for 1054. A series of Polovtsy raids on Rus began in 1061. The Polovtsy threat became particularly acute in the late 11th century, when they invaded the Kiev and Pereyaslav lands. Cities were razed, the population in part slain and in part scattered. They succeeded in cutting Tmutarakan off from the Chernigov land, and the former thenceforward became a Russian island in a sea of non-Russian lands.

The Russians launched an offensive in the early 12th century. The Polovtsy suffered a defeat in 1103 and three others soon after. These successes were due to Vladimir Monomakh's ability to organize resistance against the steppe nomads. The Polovtsy retreated to the Don, the Volga and the Yaik. Some remained in the immediate neighbourhood of Kiev, many were granted land and became the vassals of the Kiev princes. They began to play a conspicuous role in the internecine struggle of the Kiev princes. But in the late 12th and early 13th centuries the Polovtsy once again took the offensive and war was waged against them until the arrival of the Tatars.

Since the Polovtsy also presented a great threat to Byzantium she tried to keep in contact with Rus for joint resistance.

In the 12th century, after the dismemberment and weakening of the state of Ancient Rus, the Polovtsy succeed in establishing their own state in the Black Sea and Azov territories. It was called the Desht-i-Kipchak and its fron-

tiers stretched to the Dnieper in the west, included the Crimea in the south, Bulgar in the north-east and the Volga estuary in the south-east.

Kiev and Pereyaslavl were watchful, situated as they were on the edge of the steppe. Either the Polovtsy were attacking the Russian manors or the Rus *druzhinas* were advancing against the Polovtsy encampments. The life of the southern peasant was described by Vladimir Monomakh at the Dolob Congress: When the *smerd* goes out into the field to plough, he said, he is suddenly attacked by the Polovtsy; he himself is killed, his horse led away, his village plundered, his corn ricks burned, his wife and children taken into captivity.

But the state of Ancient Rus was strong enough not only to repulse its enemies, but also to use them as instruments against its other enemies. The Pechenegs, the Torks and the Polovtsy not only fought Kiev, but also concluded with it various peaceful agreements. The "black hoods," being subjects of the state of Ancient Rus, actively participated in Kiev affairs and were often prepared to lay down their lives for the Russian land.

## 9. THE REIGN OF PRINCE VLADIMIR SVYATOSLAVICH

The state of Ancient Rus reached the summit of its development during the reign of Vladimir (980-1015).

Vladimir continued the traditional policy. He fulfilled the two main functions of the state: helped the boyars to gain strength, ruled the annexed peoples and collected tribute from them, extended the frontiers of his state and defended them against the enemy, above all the Pechenegs.

We have a highly interesting story of Vladimir's war with the Kama Bulgars in 984.<sup>1</sup> During an inspection

<sup>1</sup> There are different opinions as to whether these were Kama or Danube Bulgarians. There is proof, however, that they were the Kama-Volga Bulgars, because there were Torks in Vladimir's army who



of the prisoners, his voivode Dobrynya called the attention of the prince to the fact that all Bulgarian prisoners wore boots. He inferred that the Bulgars would not pay tribute and suggested that people wearing bast sandals should be sought for that purpose.

Boots were a sign of a certain cultural level. Dobrynya realized that although the Bulgars were defeated they would not become Rus's subjects.

The chronicler mentions several campaigns by Vladimir against the Poles, the Vyatichy, the Yatvyags and the Horvatians.

In 981, "Vladimir went against the Poles and captured their cities of Peremyshl, Cherven and others which are ruled by Rus to this day. That same year, he defeated the Vyatichy and imposed a tribute per plough, like the one his father levied."

Next year he attacked the insurgent Vyatichy once again. In 983, "Vladimir went against the Yatvyags, and conquered the Yatvyags and all their lands." In 992 "Vladimir went against the Horvatians."

A long and difficult struggle lies behind these much too brief reports. Their brevity often borders on the obscure and inaccurate. In population the area around the Bug was an ancient Russian land,<sup>1</sup> and was long a bone of

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could not have possibly been living near the Danube at that time. In a panegyric to Vladimir they style themselves "silver," i. e., Volga Bulgars. Finally, it is inconceivable that Vladimir, who was an enemy of Byzantium at that time, should have helped her to crush the Danube Bulgarians.

<sup>1</sup> The part of the Western Ukraine which the chronicle calls "the Cherven cities" was inhabited by the Russians. This is indicated by the following: 1) the ancient population of that area were the Duleby, a branch of the Eastern Slavs; 2) archaeological, linguistic and legal data indicate a uniformity of culture from the Carpathians to the Dnieper; 3) the present-day Ukrainian population of the area, particularly in the countryside, is autochthonous: there is absolutely no evidence that the Poles lived there before the Ukrainians. Poland was obviously intent on capturing that region. Her struggle against the state of Ancient Rus apparently began before the 10th century. When the chronicler says that "they captured their *gorods*" he means the fortresses apparently built by the Poles or manned by Polish garrisons

contention between Poland and Rus. We do not know when the struggle began. At all events, it became pronounced in the time of Vladimir Svyatoslavich when Poland was ruled by Boleslav the Bold. It continued after Vladimir's death when Boleslav recaptured the Cherven cities. A war between Poland and Rus is also reported by German sources. In 992, the advantage was on Vladimir's side. Peace was concluded and Boleslav even gave his daughter in marriage to Svyatopolk, Vladimir's son. Titmar says that Svyatopolk, in league with Boleslav, prepared an uprising against his father. Vladimir discovered the plot and arrested Svyatopolk and his wife together with her confessor, Bishop Rheinbern, appointed by Boleslav himself. The latter, undoubtedly, planned to use his daughter and son-in-law for his own ends. It is not surprising that he launched an offensive against Vladimir in 1013.

Vladimir succeeded in extending his territories. He found it impossible, however, to advance northwards, because he lacked the means to administer these too distant lands. But then he was possibly not too anxious to go there, since they offered few temptations. They were of greater interest to Novgorod, which acted independently of Kiev.

In the west, Vladimir, after conquering the Yatvyags, advanced in the direction of the Baltic Sea. His relations with Poland allowed of no further advance.

The Rus-Polish border was defined in the will of Queen Oda (992-996), which said that Poland bordered on the Prussian land, "*usque in locum que dicitur Russe et fines Russe extendente usque in Cracoa et ab ipsa Cracoa usque ad flumen Oddere.*"<sup>1</sup>

Vladimir not only expanded his state but also strengthened the bonds linking its components. He achieved this by various means: at first he adapted the heathen religion

and largely colonized by the Polish feudal lords in their efforts to advance eastwards.

<sup>1</sup> M. S. Grushevsky, op cit., Vol. I, p. 492.



to suit his unification policy, then made Christianity a single state religion, and, finally, changed the system of administering the various parts of the state.

It appears that Vladimir almost everywhere succeeded (except among the Vyatichy) in replacing the local "eminent and grand princes" either by his own men or his children. He had many sons. The chronicler names 12 of them. He entrusted Novgorod first to Vyacheslav, and later to Yaroslav, Pskov to Sudislav, Polotsk to Izyaslav, Smolensk to Stanislav, Turov (the Dregovichy land) to Svyatopolk, Vladimir on the Volyn to Vsevolod, Tmutarakan (the Don area, the Crimea and the Northern Caucasus) to Mstislav, Rostov (in the Merya land) to Yaroslav, and later to Boris, and Murom to Gleb. Some scholars dispute the presence of Boris and Gleb in the localities mentioned. Vladimir himself remained in Kiev, holding the reins of power. The superstructure was exerting a potent and all-round effect on its basis.

Vladimir was well informed about the frontiers of his state and defended them with success. The state of Ancient Rus was one of the early feudal states and, furthermore, the biggest.

We must take into account the facts presented by the *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, which are borne out by Byzantine, Polish, West-European and Arab sources.

Vladimir was well known to his contemporaries throughout the world. He did not confine himself to the traditional policy of the Kiev princes who expanded their territories, defended their frontiers and collected tribute from their dependents. Like Svyatoslav, he played an active part in European affairs. And like him, he had to contend with Byzantium.

After the death of John Tzimiskes, the subjugated Bulgarians took advantage of the Empire's difficulties and rose up in arms against it. They were led by Samuil, the vigorous ruler of Western Bulgaria.

Vasily II, the new Byzantine Emperor, was long unsuc-

cessful in this struggle. It was only late in the 10th century that he began to gain the upper hand. For his cruel persecution of the Bulgarians he was dubbed Bolgaroboi-tsa<sup>1</sup> (he blinded 14,000 Bulgarians). In 1018, the Bulgarian Kingdom was turned into a Byzantine province.

But Vasily II found himself in dire straits in the 80's of the 10th century, when Vladimir Svyatoslavich reigned in Kiev. Internal and external complications cropped up. Bardas Phocas, who engineered an uprising against Vasily, had almost all of Asia Minor behind him, and approached the capital from the east. The victorious Bulgarians threatened it from the north. Vasily appealed to Vladimir for help.

The latter was faced with a crucial decision. Until then he had never deviated from the course charted by his father. The Arab writer, Yahia, insists that Rus-Byzantine relations were inimical on the eve of these talks. Having considered every aspect of the problem, Vladimir decided, on certain conditions, to interfere in the involved affairs of Byzantium. This signified a change of policy. We are, unfortunately, not informed as to what these conditions were. We can presume, however, that one of them was Vladimir's marriage to Anna, the Emperor's sister.

At first sight, such a provision may appear trivial. Yet the desire to intermarry with the Byzantine imperial family was an important political step planned by every European court. Otto, the German Emperor, proposed the marriage of his son to a Greek princess, but got a refusal from the Emperor, who declared that it was unheard of for a "Porphyrogenita" (one born in the purple hall of the Byzantine palace) to marry a "barbarian."

This affair lasted four years, until John Tzimisces decided to violate the tradition in 971, and, in order to facilitate his struggle against Svyatoslav in Bulgaria, agreed to give Theophano, the sister of the juvenile emperors Va-

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<sup>1</sup> A slayer of Bulgarians.—Tr.



sily and Constantine, with whom he reigned jointly, in marriage to Otto II, son of Otto I.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus gave his son the following general advice: "If any of these infidel and despised northern peoples should wish to become kin to the king of the Romeis, to take his daughter in marriage or give his own daughter in marriage to the king or his son, such an absurd request should be rejected." It was different in Vladimir's case. Vasily was threatened with the loss of throne and life. Under the circumstances he was apparently prepared to make concessions. But we can scarcely expect Vladimir to have been satisfied with this one condition.

An agreement was concluded and Vladimir sent Vasily a crack Russian army. This is reported by the Greeks. The Russian army was highly successful in its task. After two major battles the insurgent army was crushed and Phocas killed.

Having been saved by the Russian troops, Vasily II consolidated his power. He apparently failed to fulfil all the conditions stipulated and possibly refused to give his sister in marriage to Vladimir. We do not know for sure, but can infer it from the course of events. Vladimir, an ally of Vasily, whom he had just saved from political and possibly from physical destruction, suddenly laid siege to Korsun (Chersonesus in Greek), a formidable Greek fortress in the Crimea. The siege lasted several months and the city was taken. Vasily was once again forced to compromise. The tearful Anna was sent to Chersonesus where the marriage was consummated. The chronicler says that she demanded that Vladimir be baptized before the ceremony. Anna was naturally backed by the Greek Government, which regarded the adoption of Christianity from Byzantium as being equivalent to submission, on the part of the one baptized, to the Byzantine Patriarch and through him to the Byzantine Emperor.

## 10. THE BAPTISM OF RUS

This tangled skein has not yet been unraveled. Its complicated nature is due primarily to the interest it aroused even among its contemporaries. The more interest there was in the facts, the more complicated became the analysis of the problem.

The adoption of Christianity was unquestionably a fact of primary importance and is regarded by the chronicler, from his peculiar point of view, as an event of tremendous magnitude. Much was written on the subject in the 10th century and particularly in the 11th. Differing viewpoints were expressed and there is very little that we know for certain. It is not known where Vladimir was baptized: it may have been in Korsun or Kiev, and possibly in Vasilev, near Kiev. Some assert that the people of Kiev were baptized in the Dnieper, and others say that it was in the Pochaina, one of its tributaries. The details remain obscure.

But the problem of Christianity is by no means solved when we discover the time and place of Vladimir's baptism or the name of the river in which the people of Kiev were immersed. These are trifles. It is much more important to know how Ancient Rus passed from the old faith to the new, who took part in the movement, what its causes and effects were. This is more easily done.

The adoption of Christianity testifies to the great shift in the ideology of Kiev society. The heathen faith, evolved within the tribal system, was unlike the religion of class society. The former had nothing to do with classes and did not demand the subjugation of man by man. It did not sanctify the domination of one man over another. Class religion is quite different.

Rus had long been apprised of the religions which appeared in class society, among them the Jewish, Christian, Moslem. It was inevitable that Rus class society should adopt one of them, but which one was a major political problem solved by Rus's status among the European and



non-European peoples, as well as by the nature of Christianity itself, since "rejecting . . . all national religions and the ritual common to them all, appealing to all peoples without distinction, Christianity itself became *the first possible world religion*."<sup>1</sup>

Christianity first penetrated into this country long before the 10th century. There were great complications between Olga and her son Svyatoslav. The latter was an enemy of Christianity. We know, too, that initially Vladimir was an adherent of the old heathen faith which he tried to adapt to his political schemes. He planned, for purely political reasons, to gather all the gods held sacred by the various tribes in a single pantheon at Kiev, which would be compulsory for the state as a whole. He wished to establish a religion that would help consolidate the state. But this problem was solved otherwise, because of the international situation.

Our chronicler gives a dramatized description of Vladimir's examination of the various faiths. This account is quite plausible. Vladimir was surrounded by people professing the Jewish, Moslem and Christian—Western (Roman) and Eastern (Byzantine)—faiths. Christianity was known in Rus at a very early date, but some aspects of the problem remain obscure. We learn from an 866 *Encyclical* of the Constantinople Patriarch Photius that the Rus Scythians had begun to adopt the Byzantine Christian faith:

"It was not only that people (the Bulgarians) who rejected their old godlessness for the faith in Christ, but this was also done by a people mentioned and glorified by many. I mean the Rus, who, having subjugated their neighbours, became arrogant and, having a high opinion of themselves, took up arms against the Roman Empire. Today, they have themselves discarded their impious pagan superstitions for the immaculate Christian faith and hold us in esteem and friendship, although it was only recently that they harried us by their raids and outrages."

<sup>1</sup> K. Marx, F. Engels, *Über Religion*, Berlin, 1958, S. 162.

It is not very clear whom Photius meant by these Rus, because he does not mention a single geographical name in his *Encyclical*. Some believe that his remarks apply mainly to Kiev, since it was the centre of Rus at the time. Others think that he spoke of Tmutarakan Rus which was nearest to Byzantium.

In any case, a certain part of Rus had adopted Christianity as early as the 9th century. It is not improbable that it was the state of Ancient Rus of which Photius spoke. Christianity was very well known in Rus in the early 10th century, and Igor's 944 Treaty speaks of the Rus who had already adopted Christianity, for they swore to the treaty in the Christian manner ("and we, who were baptized . . .") while those who were not baptized swore on their arms by the gods Peroun and Volos.

This highly valuable document shows that Christianity was well known in Rus even in Igor's time. But that is not the point. What is important is that the Rus authorities deemed it necessary to recognize that faith as obligatory, as a state religion, in the late 10th century.

The chronicler relates the following incident in 11th-century Novgorod. Adherents of the old faith mutinied against the bishop and wanted to kill him. He came out to them with the Cross, accompanied by the prince and his retinue, and addressed them as follows: "He who wishes to place his faith in the soothsayer, let him follow him, and whosoever believes, let him come to the Cross." The prince and his retinue sided with the bishop, while the people followed the soothsayer.

This was a clear-cut expression of the class attitude towards the old and the new religions.

If Christianity did eventually become the leading religion, it signified that the ruling class was strong and numerous enough and that it wielded strong power. Had it been the concern of individuals only, the adoption of Christianity on a nation-wide scale would have been impossible.



The class structure of Kiev society is well known. The representatives of the ruling class, particularly in the cities, were sufficiently numerous, while the notables led by the princes wielded real, not ephemeral, power. The way for the adoption of Christianity as the official religion in Rus was prepared by the preceding history of classes and feudalization.

This had many important effects.

Firstly, Christianity, as the generally accepted religion in Europe, served to draw the state of Ancient Rus closer to the rest of Europe.

Secondly, the church organization created by the Greeks (Byzantines) played a very definite role in the history of Kiev society and became another potent means of influencing the masses with a view to their further subjugation.

Thirdly, the Christian Church greatly enhanced the prestige of the princely authority in Kiev, and strengthened the ties linking the several parts of the state.

Fourthly, the efforts of the Byzantine Church to draw Rus into the sphere of age-long Byzantine culture served to raise her cultural level.

After Rus's baptism, treaties with Byzantium became superfluous, because closer ties were established between the two states. These ties were strengthened through the ecclesiastical apparatus installed by the Greeks in Rus.

The first bishops and priests came from Korsun and Byzantium proper. Initially, they were all Greeks. The church organization within the state of Ancient Rus was in the hands of the Constantinople Patriarch who came to wield great political power in Rus.

Our chronicler gives a detailed account of how Christianity developed in Rus. Here is what he says:

"Even as one ploughs up the land, another sows the seed, while others reap and eat sufficient food, so is it with him. His (Yaroslav's—*Author*) father, Vladimir, ploughed up the soil and made it soft, i.e., enlightened it with baptism, while he (Yaroslav—*Author*) sowed the hearts of the

faithful with the bookish words, while we reap, accepting the bookish learning.

"For great is the benefit that comes from bookish learning. . . ."

Christianity did not become the leading religion overnight. It took it some 60 to 70 years, says the chronicler, to bear fruit. In Vladimir's time schools were already established for the children of "notable men." Books became popular, particularly thanks to Yaroslav's efforts. The greatest impact was produced not by Greek books, but by their translation into the Slavonic. The chronicler emphasizes with particular satisfaction Yaroslav's love of books and his efforts to popularize them.

We find a veritable panegyric to books in the chronicler's account of Yaroslav's activities:

"... We are instructed and shown the way to repentance by books, and we draw wisdom and acquire abstinence from bookish words. For they are rivers which feed the universe and exude wisdom. For books are of immeasurable profundity, we are consoled by them in grief; they are the reins of abstinence. . . ."

Russian masters of literary style were to be found even in Yaroslav's time. The sermons of Bishop Hilarion (11th century) and Kirill of Turov (12th century) which have been preserved, are a clear indication of the cultural level attained by that part of society which had access to schooling. But that is not all. Hilarion's *Discourse* astonishes one not only by its beauty and composition, but also by its philosophical subject-matter. There is no doubt that Hilarion had a fitting audience. He himself tells us that his word was not addressed to the uninitiated, but to those who have imbibed "overmuch of bookish delights." Speaking of the princes Igor, Svyatoslav and Vladimir, Hilarion says that they "were renowned in many countries. They ruled in no poor country or unknown land, but in the Rus-



sian, which is known and spoken of in every corner of the world."<sup>1</sup>

Architectural monuments, handicraft articles and the splendid bookbindings attest to the high level of culture. It may be presumed that a famous poet and musician of whose works, it is true, not a trace has come down to us, was a contemporary of Yaroslav. We know only that his name was Boyan, "a creator of songs of ancient times." We have a character sketch of him which we can trust because it was made by another well-known poet, who lived after him—the author of the *Lay of Igor's Host*. He says that Boyan was so skilled with his living chords that they rumbled of their own accord at the slightest touch of his fingers.

The highest expression of genuine art always gives one an impression of unusual ease. It is only when the fascination passes that we begin to comprehend how long must have been the road traversed by generations towards the attainment of such a style.

Rus was no backward country in the 11th century. She

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<sup>1</sup> As an example of Hilarion's style I give an excerpt from my translation of his *Discourse* addressed to Prince Vladimir:

"Arise from thy grave, noble man! Arise and shake off thy sleep, for thou art not dead but sleepest until the universal awakening!

"Arise, for thou art not dead, for thou couldst not die, believing in Christ, the life of the world. Shake off thy sleep, open thine eyes to see the honour God has deigned to bestow upon thee in heaven and the glory He has created for thee among thy sons.

"Arise, and look at thy child Georgy, look at thy offspring, look at thy dear one, whom God has created out of thy flesh and blood, look at him who embellishes the throne of thy land, and rejoice. Look also at thy steadfast daughter-in-law, Irina, at thy grandsons and great-grandsons, how they live, how God protects them, how strong they are in the faith thou hast bequeathed them, how often they visit the holy churches, how they praise Christ and worship His name.

"Look, also, at the city, sparkling in grandeur, the flourishing churches, the growing numbers of Christians; look at the city, sanctified by the sacred icons, glittering, fragrant with incense, and singing praises and divine songs.

"And seeing all this, rejoice and delight and praise the Good Lord, the creator of all this."

This was written some 150 years before the *Lay of Igor's Host*.

was ahead of many European countries which only later outstripped her when she bore the impact of the Mongolian hordes and acted as a shield to Western Europe.

## 11. THE EMERGENCE OF NEW STATE FORMS

With the growth of the productive forces and the attendant changes in the relations of production—in other words, with the changes in the basis—the old superstructure became increasingly less capable of satisfying society's demands and showed signs of adapting itself to the new conditions of life. The boyars, the princely menials, became the sovereigns of their greatly expanded demesnes. The peasants were exploited in a different way: primitive labour rent gave way to rent in kind, which in itself testified to a general upsurge in every sphere of social and political life. The cities matured, the urban population began to play an important political role, which enhanced the importance of the urban *veche* assemblies. Major urban centres took shape throughout the vast country, preparing to take up arms against Kiev, whose rule had become a burden to them. The importance of local authorities grew as the several parts of Rus matured economically and politically. Kiev lacked the means to administer the country under the new circumstances.

While the territory of Ancient Rus was expanding an internal process was working for its disintegration.

The several regions which had matured and continued to grow had reached a stage where they could oppose themselves to Kiev's rule. They ceased to share their income with it and showed an obvious inclination to autonomy.

The break-up of the state of Ancient Rus into a number of separate principalities was in the offing. It was a new form of state, a phenomenon well known in other feudal countries at a certain stage of their development.

How are we to explain this fragmentation common to all



early feudal states? It would appear that there was a law governing it. Upon closer examination, we conclude that it was really inevitable. The state of Ancient Rus, in particular, could not long exist in its former shape.

We shall have to take note of two aspects of the problem: firstly, the fate of the Kiev land, i.e., the parts which were in Kiev's immediate vicinity, and secondly, the history of the several lands within the state of ancient Rus.

The Kiev land itself was in a state of decline (incidentally, connected with the Crusades which lasted in Western Europe more than 200 years). They resulted in Western Europe's acquaintance with a number of countries, the opening of new trade routes and the organization of powerful trade associations. The shifting of trade routes did much to harm Kiev, that major trade centre along the great waterway from the Baltic to the Black Sea. It lost its importance as a trade centre and had perforce to lapse into poverty. Its impoverishment was also due to the fact that it ceased to be the centre of a great state which used to collect "tribute" from every part of the country.

Yet the vast country as a whole did not decline, for it is just at that time that we discover the growth of its several parts. As a city Kiev could well have coped with its temporary predicament, but for the fragmentation of the state and other attendant events which had their effect on the future of Rus as a whole. Owing to special economic and political factors, its components reached a stage when dependence on Kiev was not only useless but actually onerous.

The nobility, which had until then been solidly behind its leader, the Kiev prince, was becoming (with the growth of land tenure and changes in the economic system) increasingly independent and exacting, and, as a result, a threat to the integrity of the state.

Consider once more an important part of Rus like Novgorod. It was faced with its own big tasks. It was engaged in assimilating the North and North-East. It had to defend its frontiers against the attacks of the Swedes, and later

the Livonian and Teutonic Orders. Kiev could be of no help to Novgorod, but continued to demand tribute and manpower, the very things it most needed itself.

The same was true of other parts of Ancient Rus.

Large cities emerged in many parts, uniting entire regions around them. They were faced with their own political problems.

Kiev helped these new polities to mature, but having matured within it, they shattered it up as a shell which has become too small for its occupants.

This is also true of other early feudal states in Europe. Why was it that Italy, France, Germany, etc., fell apart and ceased to have the common existence they enjoyed under Charlemagne? It was because none of them remained immutable. New developments in the relations of production clashed with the old political system, and each component was faced with new tasks which it began to handle independently of the others. At a certain point the flimsy cohesion under Charlemagne became superfluous and even an impediment to the further growth of each part.

Manifest signs that the integrity of Rus as a state was being jeopardized appeared towards the close of Vladimir's reign. Novgorod, where Vladimir's son Yaroslav was vicegerent, was a case in point. During his long stay in that city he became a champion of purely local interests. It is not surprising, therefore, that Yaroslav, although a vassal of his father, had political plans based on local Novgorod interests. Yaroslav sided with the Novgorod boyars rather than with his father. He was no exception in this respect. His brothers—Gleb of Murom, Svyatoslav of the Drevlyane land and Mstislav of Tmutarakan apparently took the same stand in their relations with Kiev and had their own plans for their respective principalities.

In 1015, shortly before Vladimir's death, the Novgorodites, in agreement with their prince, Prince Yaroslav, stopped paying tribute to Kiev. This was interpreted by the Kiev Government as a first step towards secession.



Firmly adhering to tradition, Vladimir decided to muster an army and bring Novgorod to submission. The latter also began to prepare for war. In order to increase their defence potential they not only mobilized their own forces but also hired Varangians. The Varangian detachment arrived in Novgorod but its people massacred them in the absence of Yaroslav, who was staying at his country estate (Rakoma manor).

The Novgorod chronicler explains this by the fact that "the Varangians began to violate married women" and the Novgorodites declared: "We cannot tolerate this violence." Upon his return Yaroslav wrought vengeance on the Novgorodites, slaying those who had taken part in the massacre of the Varangians. At the height of these sanguinary events, Yaroslav was secretly informed by his sister who lived in Kiev that his father had died and that there would be no campaign against Novgorod.

A grave situation had arisen in Kiev. Vladimir was succeeded by Svyatopolk, who began to threaten his brothers. This was the selfsame Svyatopolk who, with his wife, a daughter of the Polish king, and her confessor, Bishop Rheinbern, had conspired against his father. He was arrested, but later freed. On the eve of his father's death he was free, but idle, for his father was apparently wary of giving him any assignments.

As soon as Yaroslav received word from Kiev he sent an urgent message to Gleb in Murom warning him of the danger.

How are we to explain this alarm and solidarity among Svyatopolk's brothers? Svyatopolk apparently began to implement his father's policy and that is why his brothers, who were opposed to it and had already made their stand known, were apprehensive.

Svyatopolk, nicknamed the Damned, had succeeded in killing Boris, Gleb of Murom and Svyatoslav of the Drevlyane land, and was to all appearances preparing to deal similarly with Yaroslav. This is just how the *Chronicle* ex-

plains his intentions: "I shall slay my brothers and assume power in Rus alone."

Yaroslav convened a *veche* in Novgorod and explained the situation. He begged forgiveness of the *veche* for his slaying of the Novgorodites who took part in the uprising against the Varangians, and proposed that they handle the situation together. There were two alternatives. The first was to follow Svyatopolk, and, consequently, to preserve the old relations with Kiev and pay tribute. The second was to lend support to Yaroslav who stood for political autonomy.

"My beloved and honest *druzhina*, you, whom I slew yesterday in my insanity," said Yaroslav to the *veche*, according to the chronicler, "all my gold will now not repay this loss. . . . Brethren, my father Vladimir is dead, and Svyatopolk reigns in Kiev; I want to wage war on him, lend me your support."

The people of Novgorod voiced their agreement. Yaroslav set out south with a 4,000 strong *druzhina* (according to the *Novgorod Chronicle*) together with the Pechenegs he mustered. Svyatopolk was defeated at Lubech and fled to Poland to his father-in-law, Prince Boleslav. The latter was always willing to interfere in Kiev affairs, expecting to profit at the expense of neighbouring Rus, and, in particular, to regain the lands seized by Vladimir.

Yaroslav concluded an alliance with the German Emperor Heinrich II, and together they attacked Poland. Boleslav, however, succeeded in concluding peace with Heinrich and advanced with Svyatopolk against Yaroslav in Kiev (1018). His army included hired Germans and Hungarians as well as Pechenegs.

Yaroslav met them on the Southern Bug, was routed and fled with four men-at-arms to Novgorod. However, the Polish troops did not long remain in Kiev. They aroused the indignation of the people of the Kiev area. The Russian people began to slay the Polish feudal *pans* "*otai*," i.e., in secret from the Russian authorities who, for obvious rea-



sons, could not openly side with the insurgents. Boleslav was forced to beat a hasty retreat, but managed to recapture the Cherven cities won from Poland by Vladimir Svyatoslavich not long before.

A Novgorod legend says that Yaroslav planned to go "beyond the seas" to hire another Varangian detachment, as his father had done before him and as he himself recently did, but that the people of Novgorod destroyed his boats and prevented him from going overseas. They promised to help him and, in fact, did so. This is a highly interesting example of the part played by the Novgorod masses in major political events. It also reveals the real Novgorod attitude towards the Varangians. Although this Novgorod report differs from Titmar's, it is nevertheless very probable.

Svyatopolk's triumph was short-lived. Yaroslav and the Novgorodites soon defeated him and recaptured Kiev. Svyatopolk fled to the Pechenegs and with them once again advanced against Yaroslav. The latter decisively defeated him on the Alta River, and Svyatopolk fled into obscurity. After these major events Yaroslav began to rule in Kiev. ("Yaroslav sat in Kiev; he and his *druzhina* wiped the sweat off their brows having gained a great victory and performed a great feat."<sup>1</sup>) After these events Yaroslav took a different view of things. He became dangerous to those who intended to secede from Kiev, including his erstwhile allies.

Yaroslav was opposed by the Polotsk Prince Bryachislav, his nephew. In 1021, Bryachislav attacked Novgorod and on his way home with the booty was overtaken by Yaroslav who deprived him of his spoils. Soon after, however, Yaroslav made peace with Bryachislav and even gave him Usvyat and Vitebsk. Although peaceable relations were established with the Polotsk prince, the Polotsk principality enjoyed an autonomous existence and waged a protracted struggle against Kiev.

Yet another of his brothers rose up in arms against Yaroslav—Prince Mstislav of Tmutarakan, who proved a very

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 1019; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 98.

formidable opponent. The chronicler devotes a few lines to depict him as a hero who resembled his grandfather Svyatoslav, a warlike, courageous and powerful man. The Tmutarakan prince won his struggle against Kiev, the decisive battle being fought at Listvitsa, near Chernigov, in 1023.

The following point is noteworthy in this clash of the two princes: Mstislav vanquished Yaroslav and could have captured Kiev and the entire state of Ancient Rus. But this did not occur, firstly, because "the Kievites did not accept" Mstislav, and, secondly, because Mstislav viewed Kiev with an indifferent eye and did not wish to fight the Kievites in spite of his manifest superiority. He confined himself to expanding his possessions up to the Dnieper, and became independent of Kiev.

This gives us the right to draw the following conclusions: 1) the urban population ("the Kievites") begins to have a great say in political affairs, and the princes have to reckon with this force; 2) Mstislav, by divorcing himself from Kiev, acts as a representative of the new political order (feudal fragmentation); 3) the fragmentation of the state of Ancient Rus has begun.

Yaroslav actually fulfilled his promises to the people of Novgorod as a token of his gratitude for their help. This has nothing to do with his personal integrity. He was of the opinion that Novgorod should be granted independence to enable it to cope with the tasks facing it.

We know that Yaroslav granted the people of Novgorod special deeds, which unfortunately have not been preserved. The Novgorodites prized them during the entire period of their independence. When they concluded treaties with the princes under the boyar republic they demanded that the princes swear "on all Yaroslav's deeds." They viewed them as the basis of their "constitution."

After the death of Mstislav of Tmutarakan (1036) Yaroslav succeeded in seizing his land. Ancient Rus once again became a vast and "united" state.

Personal contacts with the people of Novgorod enabled



Yaroslav to maintain close intercourse with that city. He appointed his son Vladimir as prince and often travelled there himself. He built the Sophia Cathedral in Kiev and his son Vladimir built another in Novgorod. Yaroslav's wife, his son Vladimir and his wife were buried in the latter.

The ties linking Kiev and Novgorod were not harshly severed.

Yaroslav took vigorous measures to preserve the "unity" of the state attained at the cost of such effort.

He began to suspect his brother Sudislav, who was possibly quite innocent, of designs against himself. In 1036 he imprisoned him on a trumped-up charge. Sudislav spent more than 20 years in prison.

Having settled accounts with his enemies, Yaroslav became an autocrat but paid dearly for this. Shortly before his death he had good reason to tell his sons:

"If you live in hatred of each other, in quarrel and strife, you shall yourselves perish and destroy the land of your fathers and grandfathers which they acquired with great pains."

## 12. KIEV AND WESTERN EUROPE IN YAROSLAV'S TIME<sup>1</sup>

Europe lagged behind Byzantium and the Arab Khalifate prior to 1000, but early in the second millennium there was a great advance in her economic, political and cultural life.<sup>2</sup>

Ancient Rus, which under Vladimir (980-1015) and Yaroslav (1036-54) united all the Eastern Slav tribes, was the biggest and strongest state in Europe. The Kiev princes Vladimir and Yaroslav enjoyed great prestige in international affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> This subject has often been considered but has not yet been elaborated satisfactorily. I present general information to outline Kiev Rus's international position.

<sup>2</sup> P. Ю. Буннер, "История средних веков", М. 1947. (R. Y. Wipper, *A History of the Middle Ages*, Moscow, 1947.)

## Russo-Polish Relations

Relations between Kiev Rus and Poland were very varied. Our sources mention Rus trade ties with Cracow, and this is supported by Ibn Yakub. The chronicles report military alliances between Rus and Poland concluded for joint campaigns against Germany and her allies (Rus and Poland fought against Germany and Czechia in 1076), Polish interference in Russian affairs (Polish support for Izyaslav Yaroslavich, ousted from Kiev) and Russian interference in Polish affairs (Yaroslav's aid to Casimir, "the Restorer of Poland," and Yaroslav's campaigns into Mazovia in 1041 and 1047 in support of the same Casimir). Finally, we should note the frequent marriages between the two ruling houses, which, naturally, had political ends.

There were many differences between Poland and Rus. This led to frequent breaches of the peace between the two neighbour states.

We have already witnessed the clashes between them in the time of Vladimir and Svyatopolk the Damned, during the latter's struggle against Yaroslav. Yaroslav was powerless to defend his possessions against Polish incursions while that struggle was in progress, but as soon as his rule had been consolidated he made every effort to return the lands seized by Boleslav (the Cherven cities). Yaroslav campaigned against Poland in 1022 in the reign of Boleslav, and again after his death (in 1025) against his son Mieszko. He succeeded in regaining the Cherven cities during two campaigns in 1030 and 1031. In 1040-41 he again set out for Poland, this time apparently to help Mieszko's son Casimir, who was called the Restorer of Poland.

Thus, Yaroslav helped to restore Poland, which was then in a state of decline. He gave his sister in marriage to Casimir, while his son Izyaslav married Casimir's sister. Yaroslav helped Casimir to put down the uprising in Mazovia during his two campaigns there—in 1041 and 1047.



The item for 1047 in the chronicle declares that "Yaroslav went against the Mazovians and defeated them, and killed their prince Moislav, and subjugated them for Casimir."

### Russo-Czech Relations

Rus trade with Czechia was one of Svyatoslav's acknowledged reasons for his desire to reach the Danube. Rus got her "silver and steeds from Czechia and Ungria." Other sources reveal that Rus imported her glass and tin from the former. In return, Rus exported furs, wax, honey, slaves and other commodities.

Summing up the results of Vladimir's diplomatic career, the author of the *Chronicle of Ancient Years* notes that he lived "with the neighbouring princes in peace: with Boleslav of Poland, and Stephen of Ungria, and Andrich of Czechia, and there was peace and friendship among them." Rus had close relations with these neighbouring countries, including Czechia. A deed of Boleslav II of Czechia (10th century) says that it then had a common frontier with the Russian Galich land. There was an exchange of embassies between Rus and Czechia. Their relations can also be seen from the intermarriages between the two princely houses: at least one (or possibly two) of Vladimir's wives was from Czechia. By her he had a son, Vysheslav. Vladimir's daughter by Rogneda, Predslava, married the Czech Prince Boleslav III (the Red). There were similar marriages also in the 12th century.

We know of only one armed clash between the two countries in that period. Its cause is obscure. However, it may be presumed that since Czechia was at that time under the influence of Germany, Rus, together with Poland, fought Czechia as an ally of Germany. The *Chronicle of Ancient Years* for 1076 says that "Vladimir Monomakh and Oleg, the son of Svyatoslav, went to Poland to help her against the Czechs." Vladimir Monomakh corroborates this statement in his *Precepts*.

## Kiev and Germany

Yaroslav concluded alliances with the German Emperor Heinrich III during the struggle against Svyatopolk and against the Polish King Boleslav in the 30's. We find Russian embassies in Germany in 1040 and 1043.

The 1043 embassy was entrusted with the task of arranging the marriage between Heinrich and Yaroslav's daughter. This marriage did not materialize, but other marriage contracts were concluded in the 11th century. Svyatoslav Yaroslavich married the sister of the Bishop of Trier, Burhardt, two other Rus princes (probably the younger Yaroslavichy) married, respectively, a daughter of the Saxon Margrave Otto and a daughter of Leopold, the Count of Stadt. A son of the latter couple, Vratislav, lived in Rus. Yaroslav's grand-daughter married the German Emperor Heinrich IV.

Apart from these scattered reports indicating the close relations between Kiev and Germany in the 11th century, there are many others on trade and political intercourse between the state of Ancient Rus and Germany in the 10th and 11th centuries. Rus's trade with German lands is indicated by the early customs statutes (the Raffelsteten Statutes of 903) which set tariffs on Rus wax and slaves in transit through Czechia to the area around the middle Danube.

The route from Kiev to the German lands lay through Cracow and Prague. Regensburg, the ancient starting point of routes leading to the lands of the Slavs, was a major trading centre of Rus-German trade in the 11th century. A special corporation of merchants trading with Rus, known as the Rusarii, was organized in Regensburg. Kiev attracted the German merchants with its abundance of goods of Rus as well as Eastern and Byzantine origin.

Kiev's religious ties with the West, including Germany, were dealt with above.



## Kiev and France

There is less information of Rus's ties with France. The marriage of the French King Henry I and Yaroslav's daughter Anna is well known. She outlived her husband and was married a second time to the Comte de Crépy. Having also outlived her second husband she returned to her son, Philip, King of France. Her signatures have been preserved on French documents dating back to 1063.

## Kiev, Scandinavia and the Baltic Lands

Kiev's ties with Scandinavia were much closer. Scandinavian detachments were frequently invited by Yaroslav. The Norwegian King Olaf found refuge in Kiev during his exile from Norway. His son won back the throne with Rus's aid. Yaroslav himself was married to Ingegerd, a daughter of the Swedish King Olaf (Schosskönig). Harold, another famous Viking, lived at Yaroslav's court. Later, he won fame by his military exploits in Sicily and Italy, became king of Norway and lost his life in Britain. He was married to Yaroslav's daughter Yelizaveta, in whose honour he composed a song of 16 stanzas, each of which ended with the following sentence: "Only the Russian maid wearing a golden *grivna* scorns me."

In 1030 Yaroslav campaigned against the Chud, seized their lands and built the city of Yuriev.

## 13. EFFORTS TO AVERT FRAGMENTATION. THE "TRIUMVIRATE"

The internal process leading to Ancient Rus's dismemberment—in other words, the growth of her several parts—continued and their separatism increased.

Obvious signs of feudal fragmentation appeared after the death of Yaroslav the Lawgiver in 1054.

Yaroslav had five sons. On his death-bed Yaroslav imagined that his children would submit to their elder brother

Izyaslav to whom he entrusted Kiev and Novgorod, the chief parts of his land. But his hopes were vain. Izyaslav's younger brothers found themselves at the head of sufficiently strong possessions to ignore their elder brother. Svyatoslav ruled in Chernigov and the surrounding lands which sprawled from Chernigov to Ryazan and Murom, and included the lands of the Vyatichy. Distant Tmutarakan was also among his possessions. Vsevolod was given the southernmost land, Pereyaslavl, the lands along the Volga, as well as Rostov, Suzdal and Beloozero. The other two brothers had comparatively small possessions and could not vie with their elder brothers. The three elder brothers concluded an alliance, a "triumvirate," in an effort to preserve peace and the unity of their vast territory in Eastern Europe.

The three of them drew up the statutes governing the administration of princely estates, the so-called *Pravda of the Yaroslavichy*. They jointly introduced substantial amendments in the *Russkaya Pravda* and, incidentally, eliminated the feud and replaced it by a wergild. They governed jointly the several principalities and redistributed the possessions of the princes at their own discretion. Some of the more valuable lands they held in common. They adopted a joint decision to transfer their brother Igor from Vladimir on the Volyn to Smolensk, freed their uncle Sudislav who was imprisoned by Yaroslav, and undertook a joint campaign against the Torks.

They made a joint attempt to regain the Polotsk principality. We do not see their elder brother Izyaslav becoming in any way conspicuous in all this. However, subsequent events revealed that he was dissatisfied with this equality and his exile was possibly the result of an attempt to assert his supremacy.

Bakhrushin, in his *Feudal Relations in the Kiev State*, reproached me for the use of the term "triumvirate," which he claims misrepresents the historical scene in the mid-11th century. I do not insist on this term, first used by Presnya-



kov,<sup>1</sup> but I do insist on the fact of the joint action of the three princes.

The *Laurenty Annals* are naturally ignorant of the term "triumvirate" but use a synonymous term, "trio."<sup>2</sup> The behaviour of the three brothers is clear evidence of their mutual understanding. Priselkov, who is inclined to exaggerate Byzantium's influence on Rus, suggests that this triumvirate was supported by Byzantium, which feared the disintegration of the country which so well protected the Empire from the north.<sup>3</sup>

There is not the least reason to doubt the existence of a triumvirate in Rus in the 50's and 60's of the 11th century, whatever name we give it.

But the triumvirate proved to be unsound. The first breach in it was made by the anti-feudal outbreak of the Kiev urban masses in 1068.

#### 14. THE GROWTH OF THE CITIES' POLITICAL ROLE<sup>4</sup>

The cities grew perceptibly in the period between the 11th and the 13th centuries. Their political weight increased and this found expression in the activities of the urban *veche* assemblies.

The chronicles repeatedly refer to these urban *veche* assemblies which were often very stormy. In the cities which became the centres of separate principalities the citizens showed great concern for the future of their own city and principality. The urban population appears as an important political force which at times joined the local boyars to defeat the princely authorities only to find itself in the hands

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Presnyakov, *Princely Right in Ancient Rus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Laurenty Annals* for 1067; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> М. Д. Прицелков, "Слово о полку Игореве" как исторический источник ("Историк-марксист" № 6, 1938, стр. 124—125). (M. D. Priselkov, "Lay of Igor's Host" as a Historical Source. *Istorik-Marxist*, No. 6, 1938, pp. 124-25.)

<sup>4</sup> This subject is dealt with by M. N. Tikhomirov in Chapter IV of his *Towns of Ancient Rus*.

of the former (Novgorod the Great). At other times it supported the princely authorities in their struggle against the boyars who were thus relegated to the political background (Vladimir-on-Klyazma).

But whatever the combinations entered into by the urban merchants and handicraftsmen, whatever the effects of their action, they show the growing political importance of the cities.

Our chronicles, unfortunately, centre their attention on the stormy *veche* assemblies. This has led some scholars to conclude that *veche* assemblies were invariably connected with bitter struggles.

Descriptions of *veche* assemblies give us a clear picture of the clash between classes and their underlying causes.

## 15. THE MASS MOVEMENT IN KIEV

The first large-scale Polovtsy invasion of Rus occurred in 1068. All three Yaroslavichy who went out to meet the nomads on the Alta River were defeated and fled with the remnants of their *druzhinas*: Izyaslav and Vsevolod to Kiev, Svyatoslav to Chernigov.

The defeated Kiev army convened a *veche* on the marketplace in Kiev and addressed Izyaslav as follows: "The Polovtsy have invaded the land: let us have arms and horses, prince, and we shall fight them once again." The *veche* wished to recruit a new army from among that section of the population which had neither arms nor horses, i.e., from among the common people of town and village. Izyaslav's rejection of this demand led to an uprising of the masses in Kiev, in which the common people, the *chad*, took part. They placed the blame not only on the prince, but also on his voivode Kosnyachok, who lived in the city's aristocratic section, "on the hill." The people searched for him, but he had managed to escape. A part of the insurgents made for the gaol to release the Polotsk Prince Vseslav who was imprisoned there. Another group went to the princely court to



"argue with the prince." Izyaslav was seated with his men-at-arms at an open window. The people stood below and made a great noise. The men-at-arms realized the danger, and one of them, a close associate of the prince, advised him to take steps to prevent Vseslav from being released. Others suggested to deceive Vseslav once again by calling him up to the prison window and piercing him with a sword. The prince rejected this proposal. It was much too late to do anything, however, for the insurgents would not wait. Cutting short their negotiations with the prince the people rushed to help those who were besieging the gaol. Izyaslav and Vsevolod decided to flee.

The liberated Vseslav became Prince of Kiev following a decision of the *veche*. Izyaslav fled to Poland, where he hoped to find assistance (the Polish king was his nephew). His hopes materialized and he recaptured Kiev with Polish aid. Vseslav, who was appointed prince by the people, deserted his army by night and fled to Polotsk. When the army discovered this, it retreated to Kiev. The *veche* sent its envoys to Svyatoslav and Vsevolod demanding that they come to Kiev immediately and start talks with Izyaslav, threatening to burn Kiev and depart for "the Greekish land."

This threat to leave for "the Greekish land" was not fortuitous. Vasilyevsky and Priselkov have conclusively shown that the Polovtsy issue was not only the concern of the Russians, but also of Byzantium and Bulgaria whose lands often bore the brunt of Polovtsy attacks. These states took joint action against the latter. This is an apt illustration of the cohesion of international political ties.<sup>1</sup>

The citizens of Kiev expected Izyaslav to take violent reprisals. Svyatoslav and Vsevolod offered their good offices. They asked their brother not to lead the Poles into Kiev since there was no need to do so: "Vseslav has fled, so do not bring the Poles to Kiev, for there is no one against thee;

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<sup>1</sup> V. G. Vasilyevsky, *Works*, Vol. I (Chapter "Byzantium and the Pechenegs").

if thou wishest to wreak thy vengeance and destroy the city, know that we grieve for our father's throne."

Izyaslav feigned agreement, but eventually deceived them. He sent his son Mstislav ahead who wrought vengeance on the citizens of Kiev: 70 of those who took part in freeing Vseslav were executed, many were blinded and others killed without trial. His way into Kiev was paved with the bodies of its citizens and accompanied by reprisals. Among other measures, he ordered the market-place, where the *veche* was wont to assemble and threatened him, to be transferred up the hill, to the residential section of the city where the *bo-yars* and the men-at-arms were always prepared to rise up in arms in the event of another popular outbreak. The uprising was quelled, but the resistance of the oppressed masses was not broken. It erupted with renewed force three years later.

This is the first mention of action by a *veche* assembly in Kiev. It clearly indicates the growth of the political importance of the urban population.

Quelled by the violent reprisals, the urban lower orders lay in wait but did not surrender. Unrest was rife in Kiev. Sinister rumours were afoot in the city. An unknown sooth-sayer appeared and began to confuse the people with his prophecies. He said that the Dnieper would soon flow back in its course; that the Greek land would take the place of the Rus and vice versa, and that similar changes were in store for other lands.

These rumours about the Greek and Rus lands, which appear absurd at first glance, were apparently well founded. Byzantium could not long remain an indifferent observer of the weakening of Ancient Rus's political and military might, since she had a great interest in it. Great events in Rus-Byzantine relations were apparently in the offing. They were rumoured in Rus and found their way into the chronicles.<sup>1</sup>

The chronicler could not conceal the fact that the city was full of disturbing and vague expectations.

<sup>1</sup> M. D. Priselkov, op. cit.



The uprising of the people of Kiev in 1113 and the action of the urban lower orders in connection with the choice of pretenders to the Kiev throne are considered below. All these facts support the contention that the political role of Ancient Rus cities was being enhanced.

The events in Kiev were not peculiar to that city alone. Novgorod's social and political life is no less striking. We find similar facts, which are not as pronounced, in Po'otsk, Smolensk, Southern Galich, and Vladimir-on-Klyazma.<sup>1</sup>

The growth of the cities' political power was one of the symptoms of the declining power of the Kiev prince and the dismemberment of the state of Ancient Rus.

This is clearly attested to by the political events in the Kiev state in the 11th and 12th centuries.

## 16. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE "TRIUMVIRATE." THE GROWTH OF THE FEUDAL PRINCIPALITIES

The alliance of the three strongest principalities, which for a time preserved unity and peace in the East-European plain, was short-lived. The events of 1068 proved that Izyaslav did not enjoy the support of the people and had very weak support among his brothers. Izyaslav himself, who returned to Kiev with the aid of the Polish *pans*, realized this full well, and made vain efforts to consolidate his position. The chronicler had perforce to recall the activities of the devil who instigated the quarrel among the brothers. In fact, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod who expelled Izyaslav from Kiev had good grounds to act the way they did. It is possible that Izyaslav's Polish sympathies and his tendency to embrace Catholicism had something to do with this. This fact is incidentally supported by the *Message* of Feodosy of Pechera<sup>2</sup> to Prince Izyaslav in which the author reproaches him for his Latin and Polish sympathies.

<sup>1</sup> M. N. Tikhomirov, *Towns of Ancient Rus*, pp. 197-212.

<sup>2</sup> There is a difference of opinion on whether this message belongs to Feodosy of Pechera (11th century) or to Feodosy the Greek (12th cen-

"Thou, son," writes Feodosy of Pechera, "beware of the infidels and all their teachings, lest our land should be filled with their faith." He advises him: "Take care of thy daughters, and do not give them in marriage (to the Latins—*Author*), nor take in marriage (Latin women—*Author*)." This is an obvious hint at the arrival of Polish feudals in Kiev and Izyaslav's marriage to a sister of Polish King Casimir.

The chronicler's report on the expulsion of Izyaslav is obscure: "Svyatoslav at first expelled his brother, desiring more power." He convinced Vsevolod that Izyaslav was preparing to act against them in alliance with Vseslav of Polotsk: "If we do not forestall him," Svyatoslav declared, "he shall expel us." It is possible that the idea of setting up a unified Russian authority was also mooted in Polotsk.

Izyaslav was also opposed by the citizens of Kiev, with whom he clashed repeatedly. Svyatoslav and Vsevolod, as we have seen, were much closer to the urban masses. They were approached by the urban lower orders asking them to stop a punitive expedition by Izyaslav who was on his way to Kiev with a Polish army in 1068. The Kiev folk "convened a *veche* and sent word to Svyatoslav and Vsevolod saying: 'We have already done evil by expelling our prince, and now he is leading the Poles against us.' And Svyatoslav replied: 'We have sent word to our brother that if he attacks you with the Poles we shall wage war against him...'"<sup>1</sup>

The chronicler's story permits us to infer that the Kiev tury). Golubinsky, Shakhmatov, Yatsimirsky and others ascribe it to Feodosy the Greek. Sobolevsky, A. Pavlov, Shevryyov, Bishop Makarios and others—to Feodosy of Pechera. The latest paper on this subject by I. P. Yerechin, titled Из истории древнерусской публицистики XI в. (*From the History of Ancient Russian Public Writings of the 11th Century*, *Trudy Otdeleniya Drevnei Russkoi Literatury Instituta Russkoi Literatury Akademii Nauk SSSR*, Vol. 2, Moscow-Leningrad, 1935, pp. 21-38), convinces me that the message really belongs to Feodosy of Pechera and was addressed to Prince Izyaslav Yaroslavich.

<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1897, p. 169; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 116.



urban masses were active participants of these events. Their intentions were sufficiently clear to force Izyaslav to leave Kiev before the arrival of Svyatoslav and Vsevolod.

The "triumvirate" fell apart after Izyaslav's expulsion. Svyatoslav turned out to be a major politician. While remaining prince of Chernigov he occupied Kiev. Vsevolod was relegated to the background. Although the chronicler is very sympathetic to Vsevolod (we should bear in mind that Sylvester wrote his annals upon the orders and under the control of Vladimir Monomakh, Vsevolod's son), he nevertheless notes his passiveness. ("He was tempted and instigated against Izyaslav by Svyatoslav.")

Having won supremacy, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod began jointly to rule the state of Ancient Rus. The exiled Izyaslav made his way to Poland, but it appears that this time the Polish king was in no hurry to defend his kinsman. Their relations at this time are obscure. The chronicle says that Boleslav deprived Izyaslav of the enormous riches he brought from Kiev, and "showed him the way out." This report is confirmed by a bull of Pope Gregory VII to Boleslav which mentions the money seized from the "Russian king."

But there is reason to presume that Boleslav had started hostilities in defence of Izyaslav but had suspended them due to the changes in the international situation and had even concluded an alliance with Svyatoslav and Vsevolod who expelled Izyaslav. Boleslav's stand could have been influenced by the policy of Svyatoslav, who spared no means to thwart Izyaslav's designs. Having learnt that Izyaslav had appealed for help to the German Emperor Heinrich IV, whose vassal he was prepared to become, Svyatoslav sent the latter "gifts."

The German chronicler notes that no one had ever sent such treasures to Germany as had been received by Heinrich from Svyatoslav. Heinrich refused aid to Izyaslav and the latter then appealed to Pope Gregory VII, an enemy of Heinrich.

The Polish king was not far out in his calculations. His new allies, Svyatoslav and Vsevolod, helped him in his war with the Czechs. That same year the sons of the two princes took an army to help the Poles.

After Svyatoslav died in 1076 and was buried in his demesne in Chernigov, Kiev passed into the hands of Vsevolod, but not for long.

Izyaslav's prolonged wanderings and numerous appeals to the Polish, German and papal courts finally brought him the support of Pope Gregory VII. The papal Curia Romana, an enemy of the Slavs, was ready to profit at Rus's expense. The secret of the Pope's sympathy for Izyaslav is easily explained. The latter, turned traitor, swore to the Pope that if he were reinstalled in Kiev he would recognize his authority and make Kiev Rus a lien of St. Peter. The actual aid was given to Izyaslav by the Polish king, who again found it profitable to interfere in Kiev's affairs.

While Izyaslav was betraying Rus's interests and seeking aid in Western Europe, the several parts of Ancient Rus had grown to be so strong that some of them were openly clamouring for freedom from Kiev's rule. The Polotsk principality was the chief of these. Other princes made known their aspirations in varying degree. Tmutarakan became the centre of princely dissatisfaction.

This was the period so colourfully described by our famous poet, the author of the *Lay of Igor's Host*. "Then, at the time of Oleg Gorislavich, the life of Dazhbog's grandsons was sowed, and sprouted in strife, and perished: the life of the people was shortened by the revolts of the princes. At that time ploughmen seldom urged their horses on with shouts, but raven, prowling around for corpses, often cawed, and jackdaws screeched, preparing to feast on the dead."

What was it Oleg Svyatoslavich did that made the author of the *Lay* change his name to Gorislavich?<sup>1</sup> He did

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<sup>1</sup> *Svyat*—holy, *gorye*—grief.—*Tr.*



much to hasten the dismemberment of the Russian land. But I do not intend to judge him, but rather to inquire into his motives. How did it come about that it was not Oleg alone, but a group of princes who joined together to implement their schemes, which eventually resulted in the fragmentation of the state?

The "triumvirate," which preserved the integrity of the state with great difficulty and transient success, found itself at variance with the political situation as a whole. The "triumvirs" were reluctant to submit to the Kiev prince, yet insisted on controlling the entire territory of the state and continued to view the other princes as their vassals. In other words, they did not recognize the right of the other princes to the liberties they themselves had won and prized so much.

It is not surprising, therefore, that things soon came to a head.

Rostislav, a son of Vladimir Yaroslavich, appointed by his father to Novgorod, refused to submit to the "triumvirate" and, supported by the Novgorod boyars, took an army to Tmutarakan, the seat of Prince Gleb (the son of Svyatoslav, one of the "triumvirs"). Rostislav ousted Gleb and, in spite of the intercession of the latter's father, remained to rule as the Tmutarakan prince. He carried on a vigorous and independent policy, subjugated the Kosogs and influenced Korsun's politics. He died at the hands of a citizen of Korsun, and it is possible that Kiev was a party to the deed.

After Rostislav's death, Gleb returned to Tmutarakan, whence he was transferred to Novgorod.

Gleb's brothers, the famous Oleg and Roman, also refused to obey Kiev after the death of their father. Oleg refused to go to the Murom and Ryazan land whither he was sent by his uncles, and travelled of his own accord to his brother Roman in Tmutarakan. Apart from Oleg and Roman, there was Prince Boris, the son of Vyacheslav

Yaroslavich of Smolensk, who also came to Tmutarakan in a similar mood.

Oleg and Boris hired the Polovtsy and attacked Vsevolod whom they defeated on the Sozhitsa River in 1078. Vsevolod, who was only recently in opposition to Izyaslav, who had returned to Kiev with Polish aid, now turned to him for help. The former enemies realized that they would do well to put aside their quarrels and unite in common defence of themselves and the political system they represented.

The brothers, the one an exile returned with Polish aid, the other defeated by his kinsmen with the aid of the Polovtsy, embraced heartily when they met. Vsevolod began to recount the tale of woe about the feudal principalities ignoring Kiev's authority and acting on their own and in their local interests, going so far as to conclude alliances with the Polovtsy.

Izyaslav, who had himself undergone many trials and tribulations in exile, realized that the position of Vsevolod with whom he but recently shared power, was seriously undermined. He even attempted to console the latter, although his consolations bordered on despair: "If we shall have a place in the Russian land, we shall have it together, and if we shall be deprived of it, then both." Izyaslav could only promise to stand by his brother, for better or for worse. He was true to his word, for he was slain in the first battle against the coalition of the princes (1078).

This battle and its consequences are described in the *Lay of Igor's Host*: Oleg "steps into his golden stirrup in Tmutarakan; this clang was heard by the old Great Vsevolod, the son of Yaroslav, while Vladimir (his son—*Author*) stopped his ears from it every morning in Chernigov. Boris Vyacheslavich was called to account for his vanity (he was killed—*Author*) and a pall was spread for him on the green feather grass for the insult inflicted upon Oleg, that brave and young prince. From that same



Kayala, Svyatopolk (the son of Izyaslav—*Author*) carried his father to St. Sophia in Kiev (brought his father's body to Kiev—*Author*) between Ungrian pacers."

The struggle between the systems continued; the number of opponents of the old ways increasing.

Oleg and Roman were joined by the three sons of the deceased Rostislav and by David Igorevich. With the aid of hired Polovtsy and Circassians they once again attacked Vsevolod and his son Vladimir Monomakh. Vseslav of Polotsk was poised to attack from the north. Vsevolod found himself in dire straits.

Although Vsevolod was victorious, he could not re-establish Kiev's former prestige. Here is what the chronicler says about him: "When he ruled in Kiev he was greatly grieved by his nephews. They worried him with demands, desiring to have their own regions, and wishing to appease them he gave each a region. And this was the source of his grief and calamities; besides, old age had arrived by that time. And he began to incline to the opinions of the young and held counsel with them. But they began to institute a new order of things and repudiated their comrades, and the appeals of the people could not reach the prince; these young men began to plunder the people and sell them, while he in his ailments knew nothing of these goings on."<sup>1</sup>

In his old age Vsevolod was forced to make a change of policy. He was set at variance with his old counsellors, the senior members of his *druzhina*. Their place was taken by its more democratic members for whom the chronicler has manifestly no sympathy. These new men who came to power undoubtedly introduced new ways and means of ruling the people. The chronicler says that this new rule was unlike the old one. This again stresses his desire to contrast the old times to the new. The basic difference between these two periods is easily discerned:

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<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1910, pp. 209-10.

it consisted in a change in the organization of the large economy and the forms of exploiting the dependent population: the new lords began to "plunder" and "sell" their people. In short, they fell upon their own dependents whom they regarded as an object of exploitation. The chronicler believes that this was at least in part due to Vsevolod's debility. Were he strong and young things would never have come to such a pass. But in actual fact the prince's debility had nothing to do with it. Times had changed and the Kiev prince was forced to compromise in order to retard the final collapse.

The major changes in Ancient Rus's social and political life were very correctly noted by Solovyov. But he explained them from his peculiar "tribal" point of view. "The first internecine war flared up in Rus," he declares, "due to the absence of paternal right in the several *volosts*, the desire of the orphaned princely outcasts to establish it, and the attempts of the elders to preclude its re-establishment.<sup>1</sup>

The author correctly noted the motives underlying the actions of the princes against Kiev. They were struggling for the building up and strengthening of the demesne principalities detached from Kiev. It was a struggle in which Kiev was defending its status as the head of the state, the old "mother of Russian cities." It was defeated.

But Solovyov missed the core of the problem. He ignored the development of production and social relationships which necessitated a change in the state system. It was not "the absence of paternal right" but changes in the economic system and social relationships that were to decide the issue of Ancient Rus's integrity as a state.

The several feudal principalities grew to such strength that there was no possibility of ruling them from Kiev. Kiev's hegemony gave way to the separatism of the demesne principalities and its inevitable consequence was the practice of convening congresses of the feudal princes.

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<sup>1</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 304.



## 17. CONGRESSES OF THE FEUDAL PRINCES

The first congress of the princes was held in Lubech in 1097. They had long felt the need to come to an agreement on their mutual relations. Svyatopolk of Kiev and Vladimir Monomakh invited Oleg of Chernigov, one of the most vigorous of the princes, to come to Kiev for a conference. "Come to Kiev, and we shall draw up an agreement on the Russian land in the presence of our bishops and superiors, the counsellors of our fathers, and the urban people, in order to defend the Russian land from the heathens." This invitation received an insolent reply from Oleg: "It is not fit for me to be judged by bishops, or superiors, or *smerds*." He failed to heed the advice of his brothers, the chronicler explains, and inclined to the advice of his "evil counsellors." He had good reason to think that he would be "judged" at the congress. That was in 1096.

Svyatopolk and Vladimir Monomakh attacked Oleg and drove him out of Chernigov. He went to the Murom and Ryazan land and from there began to threaten his neighbours. He succeeded in seizing the Rostov and Suzdal land, but his success was short-lived. Vladimir Monomakh's son, Mstislav, who was then in Novgorod, put an end to Oleg's claims. He twice crushed his army, after which Oleg became more tractable and came to the congress at Lubech, where the princes gathered to establish peace among themselves. It was decided that each should "hold his demesne," i.e., the land given him by his father, and refrain from encroaching upon the territory of others. "They swore by the Cross" that if any one of them should attack another, they would all rise up against the aggressor.

The congress very clearly stated the existence of a new political system and officially pronounced and recognized that "each should hold his own demesne." This was taken

as the basis of future political relations between the princes.

But scarcely had the princes departed before a bloody tragedy was enacted, involving two of the participants. David Igorevich of Vladimir on the Volyn, with the assistance of Svyatopolk Izyaslavich himself, treacherously enticed Prince Vasilyok of Terebovl into a trap. He was invited as a guest, seized, bound hand and foot and blinded upon David's order. Vasilyok was a strong and courageous man. He had been very successful in his numerous campaigns against the Polish feudals and aroused the suspicions of the other princes as to his future plans.

As a blind man, Vasilyok recalling the past said: "I hear that David wants to betray me to the Poles; he has not had enough of my blood, he wants more. I have done much harm to the Poles and wished to do more in order to avenge the Russian land. But if he betrays me to the Poles, I do not fear death..." It is possible that negotiations were in progress about Vasilyok between Svyatopolk and David on the one hand, and Poland on the other. Otherwise the threat to deliver him to the Poles remains obscure. Svyatopolk and David unquestionably feared that, in league with Vladimir Monomakh, he could become a threat to the other princes, and decided to destroy him.

Vladimir Monomakh took steps to punish the culprits. He condemned the action of David and Svyatopolk and advanced against Kiev with an army. Svyatopolk prepared to flee but was detained by the Kiev *veche*. It protested against any siege of Kiev and the attendant bloodshed. A compromise agreement was negotiated: one of the accessories to the crime was to hound the other: Svyatopolk was to fight David. The former procrastinated and then proceeded to improve his own circumstances by seizing the lands of Vasilyok's kinsmen. With the assistance of the Polovtsy David succeeded in becoming still stronger.

Three years later, a second congress was convened in Vitichev (1100). David was also summoned. This time



he was opposed by the northern coalition of princes. He was deprived of the Vladimir on the Volyn principality and forced to accept a comparatively small *volost*.

Other problems common to all the principalities were debated at these congresses. The 1103 Congress on Lake Dolob discussed joint action against the Polovtsy, and Vladimir Monomakh had to convince Svyatopolk in the need for such a campaign. The time had passed when Vladimir I could order his liege princes about. Svyatopolk's men-at-arms protested, arguing that spring was not the time to muster the peasants' horses or to take the *smerds* from work in the fields. This would harm not only the latter but also their masters, the landowners, including the men-at-arms.

Monomakh succeeded in refuting these arguments and proving that the best way to defend the economy of the peasants was to crush the Polovtsy who constantly threatened them.

The congresses of the princes proved to be incapable of reconciling the contradictory interests of the feudal lords. Might was still right with them. A powerful feudal lord could ignore the decisions of the congresses. Feudal fragmentation had become a manifest fact. Chronic feudal wars were its inevitable consequence. The "Kiev period" of Rus history had come to a close. But before the new political system with its isolated principalities had finally triumphed, Vladimir Monomakh made a last attempt to prevent Rus's dismemberment by organizing his rule along new lines.

## 18. THE 1113 UPRISING IN KIEV<sup>1</sup>

It was not only the chronicler who was becoming aware of the changes in the forms of exploitation. The peasant communities, which met the onslaught of the feudals with uprisings, continued to protest sporadically. But peasant

<sup>1</sup> See also Chapter "The Smerd Movement."

uprisings, particularly in so remote a time, could not be at all strong, even if only because their forces were so dispersed. The action of the urban masses, as described by the sources, appears to be much more impressive.

One such major uprising flared up in Kiev in 1113. After the death of Prince Svyatopolk Izyaslavich the petty urban population rose up in arms and was supported by the rural population. This prince had had a knack of antagonizing even his next of kin. A tall gaunt man, with a piercing gaze and a long beard, he was morose even at banquets. An ailment interfered with his eating and he drank only when necessary, "for others." He was avaricious and miserly in the extreme, and maintained constant contact with usurers, supporting them and granting them various privileges. Once, when salt prices went up in Kiev, he seized the entire salt stores of the Pechera Monastery in order to sell it at a speculative price. When the Father-Superior exposed his avarice and brutality, he imprisoned him. Even the Kiev monks, usually reverential towards the authorities, had a poor opinion of Prince Svyatopolk. He had perpetrated much violence on the people, and great was the confusion and plunder.

His son Mstislav resembled his father. He once heard a rumour that two Pechera monks had found a cache at the monastery. He tortured them mercilessly, demanding their secret.

As soon as Svyatopolk passed away, the people of Kiev arose and hastened to the bailey of the Kiev millenary Putyata, who had always sided with the prince and his son. After this the baileys of the centurions and the usurers were sacked. The propertied elements in the city were alarmed. They dispatched one embassy after another to Vladimir Monomakh, who was loth to interfere in Kiev affairs. The frightened representatives of the ruling class warned him that the uprising could spread. They informed him that if he did not come to Kiev immediately, the baileys of his kinsmen, the ruling notables and the usurers



would be pillaged, and that a similar fate was in store for the monasteries for which he would be answerable before God.

Vladimir arrived, being forced to violate the ruling of the Lubech Congress that every prince was to remain within his own demesne. Kiev was not Monomakh's demesne. Vladimir was elected by the *veche* which this time was convened at the St. Sophia's Cathedral<sup>1</sup> rather than at the market-place where the insurgent people reigned supreme. It was attended by the "sedate" public, fearful of popular anger. The "sedate" public, however, in spite of the solid walls of St. Sophia's, could not ignore the wishes and demands of Kiev masses. Their choice fell on a prince who was acceptable to the people. Vladimir Monomakh was indeed willing to reckon with the demands of the urban folk. The Kiev events of 1113 were practically the first instance when an alliance was concluded between the urban folk and strong princely rule spearheaded against feudal internecine wars. This reliance on the Kiev urban folk was the basic source of Vladimir Monomakh's political power.

He realized that it was imperative to lighten the burden of the debtors, victimized by the exorbitant interest rates, and of the *zakups*, i.e., those who were advanced money by their masters in return for back-breaking toil. Vladimir did both.

But he was not prepared to do away with the privileges of the ruling classes, although he took steps to lighten the burden of the oppressed urban and rural population. The usurers and landowners were not to suffer as a result of his reform, as we shall presently see. Nikifor's message to Monomakh speaks of the compromise his reform involved: "Forgive the debtor his debt. If that is impossible . . . cancel the exorbitant interest rates. . . ."<sup>2</sup> That is precisely

<sup>1</sup> V. N. Tatishchev, *A History of Russia from High Antiquity*, Book 2, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> M. N. Tikhomirov, *A Study of "Russkaya Pravda,"* p. 210.

what Vladimir did: not daring to cancel all debts, he reduced the "exorbitant interest rates." Upon his arrival in Kiev, he summoned his more prominent men-at-arms to his country palace in the princely manor of Berestovo. He also invited a representative of Oleg Svyatoslavich, the famous Chernigov prince. Together they debated the situation and drew up the *Statutes*. According to the latter, debtors paying 50 per cent annual interest were to pay it for two years only. He who had paid such interest for three years running was freed of his entire debt.

Vladimir Monomakh, as we have seen, was forced to turn his attention to the desperate circumstances of the *zakups* and all kinds of *ryadovichy*. This apparently gave him the right to observe in his *Precepts*: "I protected the poor (this may include the *zakup* as well—*Author*) and the lowly widow from the strong."<sup>1</sup>

The "*Kholop Statutes*" in the *Extensive Pravda* likewise testify to this domestic policy of Monomakh. In line with the country's economic development, Monomakh planned to reduce the sources of slavery.

Some of these new regulations proved unpractical, because there was no way of controlling all the lords who used the labour of their dependents. Nevertheless, the new regulations created a very definite impression that the times of Svyatopolk were past. For a time, the people were pacified.

The feudal princes and the boyars were also for a while pacified. They realized that they were threatened with many dangers, including popular movements. They also understood that feudal wars paved the way for such movements. Vladimir Monomakh, they realized, was the one who, not without their aid, naturally succeeded in consolidating the power of the Kiev prince and turning the demesne princes into vassals.

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<sup>1</sup> *Laurenty Annals*, 1910, p. 242; *Chronicle of Ancient Years*, Part I, p. 163.



## 19. VLADIMIR MONOMAKH (1113-25)

Long before he ascended the Kiev throne Vladimir Monomakh was well known throughout Europe, the Black Sea steppes (particularly among the Polovtsy) and in Byzantium. We have had occasion to see how popular and how exceptionally active he was at princely congresses and in all their attendant political situations. We should also note his blood ties with Europe and Byzantium. His mother was the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, his sister was married to the German Emperor Heinrich IV and he himself was married to a daughter of the English King.

There was some ground for the rumour that Vladimir could have become a dangerous rival of Svyatopolk if he had concluded an alliance with the blinded Vasilyok. And given the opportunity, Svyatopolk would have dealt with Vladimir as he did with Vasilyok. But Vladimir was very powerful.

The foreign and domestic situation was propitious to Vladimir becoming the head of the state at Kiev's invitation, in spite of the fact that it had never been a demesne of his or of his father Vsevolod. Having become the Kiev prince, he was not deprived of his own demesne—that is, he continued to be prince of the Pereyaslavl and the Rostov and Suzdal lands. He attempted to restore Kiev's shaken prestige, enhance that of its grand prince by turning the demesne princes into vassals. Thus, without violating the principles laid down by the Lubeck Congress, that "each shall hold his own demesne," Vladimir managed to bring the feudal lords into line and made them obey him.

He checked the least attempt at disobedience and ordered the other princes about as if they were his subordinates. He quickly pacified the Minsk prince, Gleb Vseslavich, who violated Kiev's northern frontier in 1116. The defeated Prince Gleb promised to obey Vladimir, but went back on his word. Thereupon Vladimir deprived him of Minsk and

transferred him to Kiev, where he died in 1119. He dealt just as summarily with the prince of Vladimir on the Volyn. Even the distant Great Novgorod had to recognize Vladimir's authority and accept a vice-gerent from Kiev.

The Polovtsy who had more than once felt the strength of Vladimir's arm, ceased their attacks.

Under Vladimir and his son Mstislav Kiev for a time became once again the political centre of a great feudal state. The feudal lords held him in high esteem. But this political situation did not last long. The new economic conditions under which the Ancient Rus principalities existed in the 12th century, and their struggle with each other reshaped the political map of Eastern Europe on which Kiev was allocated a more modest place. This was the period of feudal fragmentation or the appanage period.

The new political centres throughout Kiev Rus gave shape to the independent principalities: Novgorod, Rostov and Suzdal, Murom and Ryazan, Smolensk, Kiev, Chernigov, Seversk, Pereyaslavl, Volyn, Galich, Polotsk, Turov and Pinsk. They, in turn, broke up into smaller units.

The entire area along the Black and Azov seas, together with Northern Caucasus, was included in the Polovtsy Kingdom, which was called Desht-i-Kipchak by the Eastern sources. It meant "the steppe of the Polovtsy or the Kipchaks."

## 20. ANCIENT RUS'S POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION

Similar to other early feudal states, Ancient Rus did not exist for long. The vast territory, with its motley economic, ethnical and cultural elements held together by Kiev's rule, began to show a tendency to fall apart at a very early date. But Kiev always triumphed over the centrifugal forces so long as the balance of power was in its favour and so long as the local nobility was in favour of a strong ruler at Kiev. Kiev's claims to seniority over the other principalities were very much alive even in the



early 12th century, despite the fact that the Lubech Congress of 1097 had officially recognized the new political system. Vladimir Monomakh and, to some extent, his son Mstislav (1125-32) succeeded in upholding Kiev's prestige for some time.

But we should bear in mind that the dismemberment of Ancient Rus was primarily the result of the growth of her component parts, each of which began to follow its own policy and strive to achieve its own goals. Kiev lacked the means to further the growth of these lands, and unquestionably retarded their development by its demands for men and money.

Their inevitable isolation deprived the Kiev prince of tributary payments which he was wont to receive from his dependent tribes and peoples since time immemorial. This occurred at a time when Kiev was particularly in need of material means to finance its struggle against these separatist tendencies. But that was not all. International events were afoot which eventually dealt Kiev's economic position a telling blow.

A movement began in Europe in the 11th century which resulted in shorter trade routes from Byzantium and Asia Minor to Western Europe, bypassing the Dnieper.

In 1082, Byzantine Emperor Alexis Comnenus granted a deed to Venice which had given him military aid in the war in Sicily. This gave Venice greater advantages in its trade with Byzantium than were enjoyed by the Emperor's own subjects. Venetian merchants were freed from all duties and a special district and wharves were assigned them in Constantinople. This helped Venice to become a merchant Power of the first magnitude. Kiev's trade, mainly in transit goods, became of secondary importance.<sup>1</sup>

The Crusades were also highly conducive to the development of trade by Italian, South-French and Rhine cities. The latter gained control of the Mediterranean routes

<sup>1</sup> М. Д. Приселков, Византия и Русь в XI в. (рукопись).  
(M. D. Priselkov, *Byzantium and Rus in the 11th Century*. MS.)

which had until then been in the hands of the Arabs and the Byzantines. Eastern goods were carried to Europe by the Italians along the Mediterranean and reached Central Europe via the Rhine. A trade alliance, which set up its officers throughout the Baltic, was organized by the Rhine cities. Novgorod was at its north-eastern terminus and was one of the Russian cities which received compensation for its weakened position on the great water-way "from the Varangians to the Greeks" due to this displacement of world trade routes.

The cities along the middle reaches of the Dnieper decayed after this shift in the trade routes. Kiev was the most striking illustration of this process. Deprived of its old economic importance it began simultaneously to lose its political importance.

By the middle of the 12th century (particularly in its second half) the consolidation and separation of the new political centres, on the one hand, and Kiev's weakening on the other, was so far gone that Kiev not only ceased to be the capital of a large though unstable state, but became of secondary importance even among the local centres. Yet in the eyes of the Rus people it continued to be a symbol of Ancient Rus's former grandeur.

This emergence of the separate feudal principalities which eventually led to the fragmentation of Ancient Rus was by no means peaceful.

Summing up Rus's historical development in the late 11th or early 12th centuries, the chronicler deemed it necessary to underline the difference between the present and the past. He is manifestly in favour of the past. In olden times (he means the period of the growth and prosperity of the state of Ancient Rus) the princes and their men expanded the territory of the Russian land, but led a frugal life. Turning to his own times, he stresses the marked change in the attitude of the ruling classes to their dependents. He speaks of their insatiable greed and, addressing the rich, says: "For our greed, has God sent



the heathen on us, and our cattle, and our manors and estates are in their hands, but we do not desist from our evil ways."

It is fitting to recall later comments on that period. The author of the *Lay of Igor's Host* bewails the disastrous state of the feudally disintegrated Rus and turns to the glorious past recalling the "initial years" and the "first princes." Why could not "old Vladimir" have for ever remained in Kiev?<sup>1</sup> This historic topic inspired the author of yet another poetic work, the *Discourse of the Fall of the Russian Land*.

Indeed, many new developments which could not be ignored appeared in social and political relations late in the 11th century.

We have already seen that changes had occurred in the forms of exploitation of the dependent population. The economic and political role of the local notables was enhanced. We shall have a clear picture of what was going on in Kiev Rus in the 11th century (the process noted by the chronicler in his peculiar yet forceful way), if we take into account the growth of the cities and the attendant awakening of the *veche* assemblies, particularly in the leading cities whose *veche* decisions were obligatory for the surrounding countryside, and if we bear in mind that these cities were the seats of the landowning nobility which entered into certain relationships with the urban masses. The chronicler had good reason to underscore the sharp distinction between his time and the relatively recent past.

The struggle of the Russian people for their independence was particularly acute at this time. The changes which were afoot in Ancient Rus, and above all the weakening of her military might as a result of the isolation of the lands, raised hopes among her neighbours, who were eager to expand their territories at her expense.

<sup>1</sup> А. В. Соловьев, Политический кругозор автора „Слова о полку Игореве“ („Исторические записки“, т. XXV, стр. 85). (A. V. Solovyov, *The Political Views of the Author of the "Lay of Igor's Host."* *Istoricheskie Zapiski*, Vol. XXV, p. 85.)

The Polovtsy, who were driven beyond the Don in Monomakh's time, reappeared on Rus's southern territories. This onset of the nomads gained great force in the 60's of the 12th century.

Rus's historical development did not continue on the territories she initially possessed. There was a displacement to the north and north-east, north-west and west, with the southward trend in territorial expansion gradually losing its momentum and the lands grouping themselves around a number of new centres.

Each new independent land became a political system with its own landowning hierarchy (princes and boyars) and highly involved relationships. These separate cells were increasingly concentrating on their local interests, which were extremely narrow compared with the sweep of Ancient Rus's international political activities. They were shrinking perceptibly. However, these entities led an intensive existence and prepared the groundwork for the formation of new states in Eastern Europe, including the biggest among them—the Russian centralized state.

I have noted the sharpening struggle between the two systems in the 11th century, namely, between the old, which stood for Kiev's supremacy over a vast territory inhabited by Russians and partially by non-Russians, and the new, which rejected Kiev's right to dispose of all the forces of the state and advanced a new principle of sovereign existence for every *volost* become principality.

We have seen how this struggle progressed under the first Yaroslavichy. Monomakh and his son could merely retard the Rus's fragmentation but could not stop it altogether.

It would be natural to expect that Mstislav should hand Kiev on to his son in the way he himself got it from his father Monomakh. But that was not so.

The *Laurenty Annals* for 1132 say the following: "Vladimir's son Mstislav died on the 14th day of April and was succeeded by his brother Yaropolk, for the people



of Kiev had sent for him." The successor to the Kiev throne was chosen by the people of Kiev themselves, i.e., the Kiev urban *veche*. Nothing of the kind would have occurred in Ancient Rus's hey-day.

The children of Mstislav Vladimirovich found themselves in the custody of their uncle Yaropolk. He tried to provide for them and appoint them to more profitable cities, but met with determined resistance from his own brothers. Yury, who was nicknamed Dolgoruky,<sup>1</sup> was particularly active in this respect. He had his seat in the Rostov and Suzdal land, but never ceased to dream of Kiev.

One of Yaropolk's nephews, Izyaslav Mstislavich, who considered himself wronged by his uncles Yaropolk and Yury, signed a compact with the Chernigov princes, the famous Olegovichy, the descendants of Svyatoslav Yaroslavich, one of the "triumvirs." This was an alliance which boded evil for Kiev, because they were the most vigorous and confirmed proponents of the new political order of things, so clearly set out in the resolution of the Lubech Congress ("each one shall hold his own demesne"). The Olegovichy told Yaropolk that they wished to hold what their father held before them ("what our father held . . . that also we wish.") If Yaropolk insisted on his right to rule the entire Rus land, they could not be made answerable for the consequences: "... you shall be to blame, the blood shall be on your head." Novgorod also protested against Yaropolk's actions: the Novgorod *veche* condemned Vsevolod Mstislavich for having obeyed Yaropolk and left Novgorod for Pereyaslavl. It expelled him and invited Svyatoslav Olegovich who was a champion of the sovereignty of the separate principalities. The people of Novgorod wished to put an end to the strife and sent their vice-gerent to Kiev to "establish peace between the Kievites and the Chernigovites."

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<sup>1</sup> *Dolgoruky*—a derivative of *dolgy*—long and *ruka*—hand.—*Tr.*

Yaropolk was attacked by the Olegovichy of Chernigov who were allied with Izyaslav and his brother Svyatopolk Mstislavich as well as by the Polovtsy. The latter were victorious. They consolidated their positions in the Chernigov land and in 1139, after Yaropolk's death, Vsevolod Olegovich even took Kiev and ousted Vyacheslav, Yaropolk's brother, who tried to gain a foothold there.

This struggle resulted in greater independence from Kiev not only for the Chernigov, but also for the Galich and Polotsk, and the Rostov and Suzdal lands. The Olegovichy became a powerful force, which meant that the new order had manifestly triumphed.

Vsevolod Olegovich (1139-46) rose to great heights as a politician. He was a vigorous and skilful man who could find his way in the most difficult and involved situations and knew how to pit his enemies against each other. Being the prince of Chernigov, he held sway over the greater part of the former state of Ancient Rus. But the nature of his rule in Kiev shows that he regarded it as his prize, and no wonder the Kiev masses were hostile to him. Deprived of the possibility of rising up against him, they made short shrift of his henchmen as soon as he died. The general feeling against the Olegovichy was expressed as follows: "... We do not wish to be the hereditary possession of the Olegovichy." The Kievites, who had got an inkling of their own strength in the choice of their prince, were dissatisfied with being treated as a hereditary possession by Vsevolod and his brother Igor, whom the former was intent on foisting on the city.

The twelve days after Vsevolod's death are highly indicative. Vsevolod had laid the groundwork for his brother Igor's succession to the Kiev throne. Depending on his strength and having won the support of Kiev's upper classes, he underestimated the enhanced importance of the city's merchants and handicraftsmen, who annulled his will.

The city's lower orders convened a *veche* and resolutely repudiated the decisions of the previous assemblies of



Igor's aristocratic supporters. This *veche* brought to trial Vsevolod's henchmen, above all Prince Igor himself. The latter feared the *veche* but dared not ignore "the invitation" to attend it. He took his men-at-arms along and prepared an ambush, meanwhile sending a more neutral figure, namely, his brother Svyatoslav, to attend the assembly. The latter had to listen to the people's complaints against the violence rife in the previous reign and to promise, on his brother's behalf, to eliminate the abuses of Vsevolod's henchmen. On these conditions the *veche* agreed to recognize Igor as their prince. But it was obvious that the decision was not unanimous, because the city's lower orders immediately launched an attack upon the princely administrators and apparently concluded an agreement with Izyaslav Mstislavich, Monomakh's grandson, who was prince of Pereyaslavl and was more acceptable to them.

Izyaslav advanced against Kiev at the head of an army, defeated Igor and entered the city "with great glory and honour." Igor was deposed and arrested. Izyaslav did not prevent the expression of popular wrath ("much property was taken from the houses and monasteries.")

The Olegovichy attempted to organize a coalition against him. An agreement was reached between Svyatoslav, the brother of the deposed Igor, and Yuri Dolgoruky, prince of the Rostov and Suzdal land.

A stubborn struggle ensued, involving not only Russians, but also Hungarians, Poles, "black hoods" and Polovtsy.

The enhanced role of the cities once again becomes manifest in the course of this struggle. Izyaslav was convinced that the citizens of Kiev and also the *smerds* would side with him against Svyatoslav Olegovich and Yuri Dolgoruky, since the *veche* decision of the leading city was obligatory to the outlying areas and villages. He was quickly proved wrong. The citizens of Kiev and Vladimir-on-Klyazma had their own opinion of the struggle and Izya-

slav's suggestion that the Kievites join him against Yury and Svyatoslav was firmly rejected by the Kiev *veche*. Yury thrice seized Kiev in the course of this struggle and finally entrenched himself there in 1156. He remained in Kiev until his death on May 15, 1158.

A popular movement flared up as soon as Yury died. "Much evil was done that day," says the chronicler, "his magnificent palace was plundered, and another one plundered beyond the Dnieper, which he himself called a 'paradise,' and the palace of his son Vasilyok was plundered in the city; the Suzdal people were assaulted in town and village, and their goods seized." This movement came as no surprise. Yury had seized Kiev by force and the people of Kiev had long since declared that "they could not live with Yury."

What was it Yury had in the South, in the Kiev land? This is no idle question. Yury possessed only a small strip of land along the Goryn River, the Turov and Pinsk land which, incidentally, became isolated very soon, Kiev with the surrounding territory, and Pereyaslavl, Kiev's threshold. He could not claim more because the other lands had already won their independence and were strong enough to defend it.

When Yury arrived in Kiev, he appointed his sons to the surrounding cities: Andrei to Vyshgorod, Rostislav to Pereyaslavl, Boris to Belgorod, Gleb to Kanev, and only Vasilyok was sent to Suzdal.

The *volosts* beyond Kiev's frontiers were leading an independent existence regardless of the Kiev prince.

Yury's reign may be called a period of history in which Rus's fragmentation had been completed. In this system of feudally divided Rus, the Kiev land occupied a very insignificant place. It did not even have the chance of becoming a polity with its own system under a local dynasty. The princes who had their seats in the *udels* saw to it that the Kiev land did not fall to any of them as an independent principality. Yury was succeeded on the Kiev throne by



Izyaslav Davidovich of Chernigov, a descendant of the Chernigov Svyatoslavichy (1158-60), Rostislav Mstislavich of Smolensk (1160-68) and Mstislav Izyaslavich of Volyn (1168-69). All of them, while ruling Kiev, remained lords of their own demesnes.

When Mstislav Izyaslavich of Volyn got Kiev, Volyn remained his strongpoint to fall back on in time of crisis and his permanent possession. Kiev, which had previously striven to control Volyn, and actually did so, now changed places with it.

Mstislav was a vigorous and enterprising man, a lover of books, as well as a fearless and capable military leader. He succeeded in organizing a campaign against the Polovtsy in which 13 princes, enumerated by the chronicle, took part. They were owners of principalities and "many others." The "black hoods" also took part in the campaign, for they had long before linked their destiny with Rus. The Polovtsy suffered a crushing defeat.<sup>1</sup> But Mstislav likewise failed to protect Kiev from the force which had in the meantime appeared in the area between the Volga and the Oka.

It was Novgorod that sparked off the war between Andrei of Vladimir and Mstislav of Kiev. The Vladimir prince, intent on possessing Novgorod, could not stand by and see Mstislav take steps to retain Novgorod under his control, for the latter had appointed his son Roman to Novgorod although Andrei had a vice-gerent in the city. Moreover, Roman was inimical to Andrei's allies and the latter decided to crush both Novgorod and Kiev. Novgorod succeeded in defending itself and celebrated its victory over the Suzdal and Vladimir army on February 25, 1170. However, Kiev fell to the enemy on March 8, 1169.

<sup>1</sup> Mstislav convened the princes in the spring of 1168 and exhorted them: "Have pity on the Russian land. . . . Every year (the Polovtsy—*Author*) lead the Christians away into their encampments. They conclude sworn agreements with us and invariably violate them. And they have seized our route to the Greeks, and the Salt Route and the Zalogny Route." (*Ipaty Annals*, p. 368.)

Prince Andrei (1157-74), a son of Yury Dolgoruky (Kiev prince since 1154), had a seat near his father's city in the ancient princely castle at Vyshgorod. He refused to live in the South and preferred the Rostov and Suzdal land. He secretly left Vyshgorod and went to Vladimir-on-Klyazma (he built himself a new castle at Bogolubov, a few miles from Vladimir, and was known as Bogolubsky after that place). In 1169, he organized a big campaign against Kiev.

During the sack of "the mother of Russian cities" there were great material losses and our scholars were deprived of an abundance of written sources.

In 1203, some 30 years later, Kiev was sacked for the second time.<sup>1</sup> Batu's sacking consummated the work begun by the feudal wars. This largely explains the paucity of written sources pertaining to that highly eventful period of our history.

Here is what Solovyov wrote of Andrei's campaign: "It was not of his own accord that Andrei brought his troops to Kiev, the capital city of his ancestors, and later gave it, devastated, to his younger brother, himself remaining in the North, at his old seat in Vladimir-on-Klyazma. Andrei's action was an event of momentous importance, a turning-point in history which marked the beginning of a new order of things."<sup>2</sup> That order, however, was ushered in by foregoing events.

In this case, too, Solovyov correctly noted the fact but

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<sup>1</sup> "Kiev was taken by Ryurik and the Olegovichy and the entire Polovtsy horde. And there was such great evil in the Russian land, as Kiev had not suffered since its very baptism—there had been calamities and seizures, but not like the present evil: they burnt down not only the Podolye, but also the Gora, and plundered the Metropolitan's St. Sophia, the Desyatinnaya Church of the Holy Virgin was also plundered, and all the cloisters, and the icons were stripped, and some took away the holy crosses and the sacred chalices and books, and the vestments of the first virtuous princes, which they kept in the holy churches in memory of themselves. . . ." (*Lawrenty Annals* for 1203.)

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Solovyov, *A History of Russia from the Earliest Times*, Book I, p. 490.



explained it from his "tribal" point of view. He believed that until then Rus had been held by a major princely family among whose "princes there was a community of interests." Then Andrei Bogolubsky, Solovyov thinks, established an independent and powerful seat at Vladimir.

We have seen that it was no princely family which controlled Ancient Rus, and that the princes, in spite of being kinsmen, had long since each begun to aspire to an "independent" seat, and that many of them had succeeded in achieving this before Andrei did. He was no exception, but merely one of the more striking illustrations of an order of things which entailed changes in the superstructure under the impact of changes in the basis. If Andrei had any distinctive trait, it was his strength, with which other princes were forced to reckon.

However, Andrei displayed certain traits which make him kin to future Moscow statesmen who succeeded in achieving what Andrei lacked the means to do. Moscow won its successes on a new basis which did not yet exist in the 12th century.

The high standing of the Vladimir prince was the result of favourable circumstances which encouraged the growth of princely authority in the North-East. Strong princely rule in that period of "general confusion" was undoubtedly conducive to the formation of a national state. But before it had made any progress to speak of, Rus fell victim to the Tatar khans, whose rule for long checked the further development of the Russian people.





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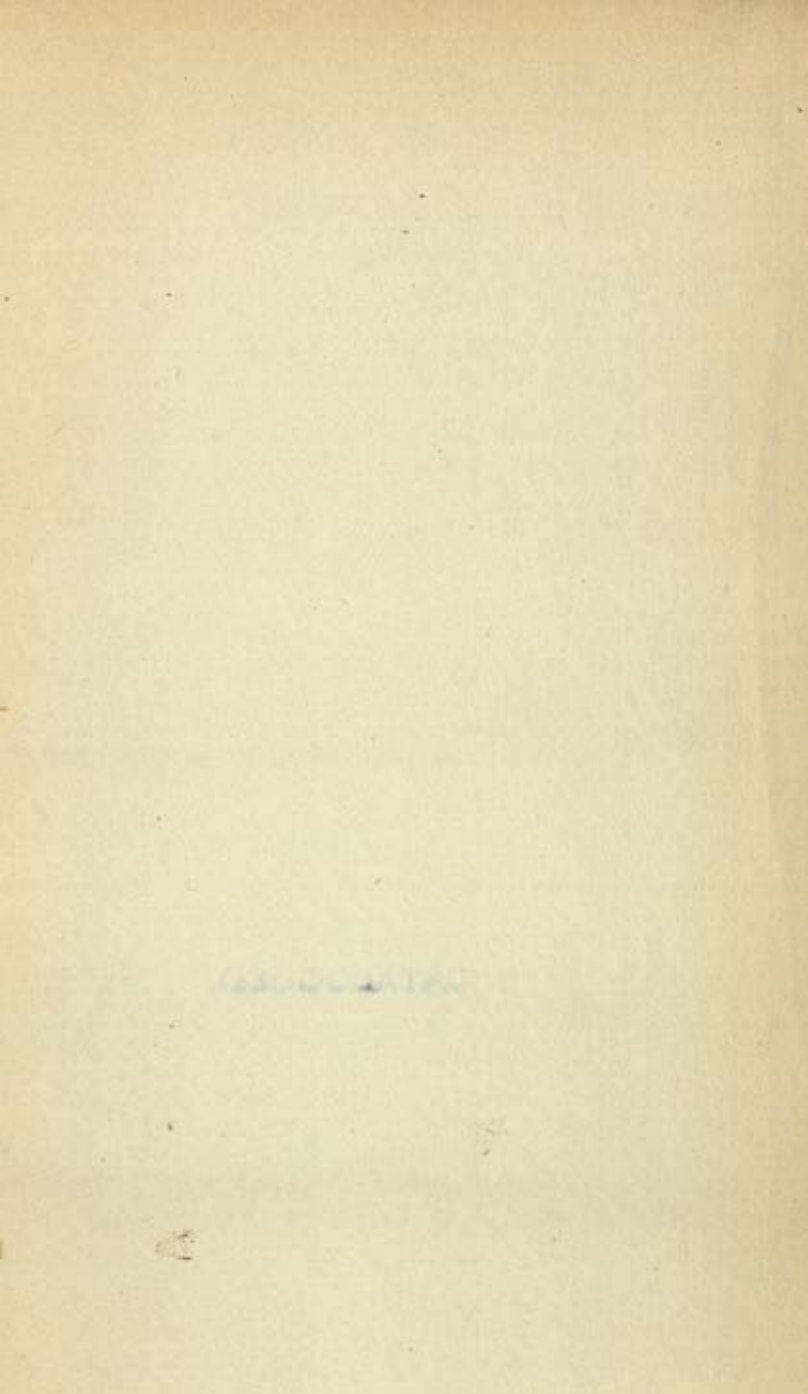
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